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THE REPUBLICAN SOLDIER: HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIONS AND HUMAN REALITIES

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Abstract

My dissertation addresses two related questions about the soldier of the Roman Republic: how writers who treated the Republic interpreted the figure of the soldier, and what that soldier's real experience was like. The dissertation shows how the soldier figure was wound into the overall objectives of the writers Polybius, Livy, and Sallust, who made the figure of the Roman soldier essential to their conceptions of Roman national character, and used the soldier to demonstrate their perceptions of the ascension, stability, and then decline of Roman society. I conclude that the soldier figure has a privileged role to play in Roman self-identity and representation.

I then address how we can access the soldier's real experience, and use the *Bellum Hispaniense*, the work of a low ranking soldier, to demonstrate that the soldier's major concern is for information. Success in warfare and the cohesion of an army depend on the soldier's mentality, rather than his physical body. I explore this by creating a methodology for interdisciplinary research involving modern history and psychology. I argue that unusual or seemingly incongruous incidents, instead of being labeled as romantic or legendary discourse, can be usefully reframed in terms of the study of human behavior. I show similarities between recorded behaviors of Roman soldiers and documented cases of modern soldiers who have developed dependency on their leaders. I also address the Roman army more broadly, and argue that the rules and regulations in the Roman army bear strong resemblances to those employed in the German Wehrmacht and the Iraqi army to encourage "victory or death" style soldiering. I conclude that this historiographical trope was deliberately enforced using psychologically manipulative methods.

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THE REPUBLICAN SOLDIER: HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIONS AND
HUMAN REALITIES

Kathryn H. Milne

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The Republican Soldier: Historiographical Representations and Human Realities

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For my parents

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ABSTRACT

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Kathryn H. Milne

Campbell A. Grey

My dissertation addresses two related questions about the soldier of the Roman Republic: how writers who treated the Republic interpreted the figure of the soldier, and what that soldier's real experience was like. The dissertation shows how the soldier figure was wound into the overall objectives of the writers Polybius, Livy, and Sallust, who made the figure of the Roman soldier essential to their conceptions of Roman national character, and used the soldier to demonstrate their perceptions of the ascension, stability, and then decline of Roman society. I conclude that the soldier figure has a privileged role to play in Roman self-identity and representation.

I then address how we can access the soldier's real experience, and use the *Bellum Hispaniense*, the work of a low ranking soldier, to demonstrate that the soldier's major concern is for information. Success in warfare and the cohesion of an army depend on the soldier's mentality, rather than his physical body. I explore this by creating a methodology for interdisciplinary research involving modern history and psychology. I argue that unusual or seemingly incongruous incidents, instead of being labeled as romantic or legendary discourse, can be usefully reframed in terms of the study of human behavior. I show similarities between recorded behaviors of Roman soldiers and

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Introduction

I. General Introduction

This dissertation is a project of intellectual history, which investigates popular thought and perceptions about the soldier figure during the Republic and sets them in dialogue with accounts of real human experiences in war. It is about thought, mentality, and psychology. It should be noted that the ideas about the soldier with which this dissertation is concerned are naturally not the only ones in evidence during the Republican period. I have therefore chosen to examine those authors and accounts which help to define the soldier's relationship to the rest of society. This central theme operates on a number of different levels. I deal with semi-mythological stories and etiological legends, which allow us access to broad themes about what the Roman soldier means to the Roman nation. These stories indicate that the Roman people attached great significance to the figure of the soldier and related him to larger concepts about Rome's place in the world.

I also examine the authorial treatment of themes about the soldier. The soldier figure is integral to Roman life and to Roman self-perception, and so he plays a large role in the world view of historians of Rome. For Polybius he is behind her success, for Sallust a measurement of her decline, and in both authors, vital to perceptions about the health of the state. When considered together, all the authors treated in this dissertation contribute parts of a larger picture which helps to frame the soldier's relationship to the

rest of society. The soldier is the means by which the citizen makes his contribution to society, and the figure of the soldier as a conqueror of others is linked to Rome's success as a nation. In Livy, if one ceases to perform the duties of a soldier, one ceases to be perceived as a soldier in the eyes of the rest of Rome, and as a result the offender suffers social marginalization and exclusion. The Romans cast out groups of men who have ceased the pursuit of soldiering. Sallust sees the same vision on a larger scale. When war is taken away altogether, the state loses its moral integrity. In all these authors the soldier plays a central role in Rome's ascendancy, stability, and finally decline.

The latter part of the dissertation employs an interdisciplinary, comparative methodology which aims at gaining a more nuanced understanding of the soldier's real experience. I use psychological studies of the German Wehrmacht and other modern armies, which provide accounts of soldiers in strikingly similar circumstances, in order to elucidate how soldiers in the Roman army were induced by their experiences and surroundings to shift their loyalties from state to commander. This both marks a change in mentality for the soldier and creates a new reality which is completely opposed to traditional views about the soldier which make him so integral to the fortunes of the Roman state.

II. Approaches to the Military

An examination of the scholarship surrounding the Roman soldier reveals that there are studies which address related matters, but none which directly address the question of this dissertation, what significance the soldier has for Roman society. There are studies

which are close to this topic, such as Phang's *Roman Military Service: Ideologies of Discipline in the Late Republic and Early Principate*, which examines the social and cultural implications of discipline in the army.¹ Unfortunately it lies on the other side of the late Republican divide, dealing with the period post-Marius and particularly the professional army of the Empire. Part of the ideology of *disciplina militaris* was to make a greater separation between civilian and military spheres than existed in an earlier period, and by this means legitimate the army's connection to the state.² Addressing a republican time period but a different impact of the army, Rosenstein's *Rome at War: Farms, Families and Death in the Middle Republic* examines the connections between the army and land and population. This method of approaching the army in terms of its practical impact on society is also reflected in another recent collection, *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 BC-AD 476)*, edited by de Blois and Lo Cascio.³ Its major claim -to examine the cultural impact of the Roman army on society- sounds like a project of intellectual history similar to this study, but in fact for the most part it examines the economic and cultural impact of the presence of the army on external peoples.

These kinds of studies, however, are indicative of a new trend in Roman army studies, which has enjoyed a renewed interest in recent years with two new anthologies which aim to bring together the sum of most recent scholarship regarding the army. These are *Blackwell's Companion to the Roman Army* and the two-volume *Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, which have sought to bring together the most

¹ Phang (2008).

² Phang (2008), 3-5.

³ De Blois and Lo Cascio (2007).

recent thought about the Roman army.⁴ A new journal dedicated to the military in antiquity, *Revue des Etudes Militaires Anciennes*, began in 2004.

While there has been renewed interest in discussions of the army as an entity, studies which address the soldier as an individual remain relatively rarer. For a long time, scholarship which approached the soldier on an individual level used facts and technical details to catalogue the soldier's experience. Works such as Watson's *The Roman Soldier* and Davies' *Service in the Roman Army* as well as many other of Davies' articles, represent an interest in the technical aspects of the soldier's experience from which current scholarship is moving away.⁵ This category of works also include many comprehensive and impressive volumes which include details about numbers, recruitment, locations, weapons, legal aspects of army service, procedures, and fighting-indispensable guides to any study of the soldier. In this number I include Harmond's *L'armée et le soldat a Rome de 107 à 50 avant notre ère*, Brunt's *Italian Manpower*, and Le Bohec's *the Imperial Roman Army*.⁶ Also addressing the Empire and largely examining army regulations and the relationship between the soldiers and their environment are Alston's *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt* and Wesch-Klein's *Soziale Aspekte des römischen Heerwesens in der Kaiserzeit*.⁷ Although valuable, these works have a different agenda from this dissertation, which asks not what the soldier does, but what he symbolizes. The lack of work in this area has been noted. In his 1993 article

⁴ Erdkamp (2007); Sabin et. al. (2007).

⁵ Watson (1969); Davies (1968); (1969); (1972); (1974); (1989).

⁶ Harmand (1967); Brunt (1971b); Le Bohec (2000).

⁷ Alston, (1995); Wesch-Klein (1998).

“The Soldier” Carrié wrote that a full picture of the soldier was a study that had yet to be attempted:

The soldier as a social actor; as he creates, reproduces, or diffuses patterns of behaviour and ways of thinking; the image that soldiers had of themselves and that other groups had of them; what they and others had to say on the subject- all that has up to now been taken up only topic by topic.⁸

In recent years scholars have begun to close this gap, addressing piece by piece issues about the soldier and his relationship to broader ideas in Roman society. McDonnell's *Roman Manliness* addresses the integral place of the soldier in ideas of what constitutes manliness or *virtus*; and Keaveney argues in *The Army in the Roman Revolution* that it is the soldier's very isolation from societal norms which revolutionized the Rome of the Late Republic.⁹

A slightly different approach to this same set of questions has been to privilege the individual soldier qua soldier, and to address not his technical experience but his psychological experience. The application of psychological principles to historical armies goes back at least to John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*, which sought to understand the individual's experience on the battle-line.¹⁰ Since then, attempts have been made to approach the soldier's everyday realities, such as MacMullen's discussion of the legionary community in “The Legion as Society”, Lee's contribution to our understanding of the soldier's perspective in battle, “Morale and the Roman experience of battle” and Van Wees in *Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities*, who has discussed what

⁸ Carrié (1993), 101.

⁹ McDonnell (2006); Keaveney (2007).

¹⁰ Keegan (1976).

the on the ground hoplite experience in Greece would have been like.¹¹ A branch of scholarship complementary to this soldier's-eye view has been to read through our texts with a view to observing and interpreting the activities of soldiers. This approach has found two excellent champions in de Blois and Chrissanthos. de Blois has argued for the importance of the military "middle cadre" (centurions, prefects, and military tribunes) in deciding the actions of the armies.¹² Two of Chrissanthos' recent articles, "Caesar and the Mutiny of 47 B.C.," and "Freedom of Speech in the Roman Republican Army" have heavily influenced the current study for their approach of isolating and privileging the activities of the soldier in order to make sense of historical situations.¹³

In the latter half of the study I develop the theme of mind and mentality by examining the psychology of the soldier in the Republic. Scholars of this period of the history of the Roman army have always understood the importance of the individual soldier's psychology in bringing about changes to the character and behavior of the Late Republican armies. The way in which these psychological changes have been commented upon, however, has done more service towards rendering them opaque than elucidating the manner or method by which they came about. Soldiers built up a new and stronger *esprit de corps*, they forged "strong collective identities of groups of soldiers" and "a strong sense of unity and a keen understanding of their own interests."¹⁴ I disagree with none of these verdicts but I believe that these statements are a

¹¹ MacMullen (1984); Lee (1996); Van Wees (2004).

¹² de Blois (2007); (2000).

¹³ Chrissanthos (2001); (2004).

¹⁴ Watson (1969), 22; de Blois (2007), 173; 175.

pronunciation of the solution to the sum, without the workings which show how one arrived at the answer.

In order to fill this gap a new methodology is needed that pays careful attention to the conditions which might have turned a patriotic soldier into the partisan of an individual general. I investigate how the traditional connection between soldier and state breaks down for the Late Republican soldier, with reference to the psychological factors which work to break his connection to the idea of the state and re-focus it upon the soldier's immediate community in the army. I apply group cohesion theory, a well-known and documented branch of psychology which elucidates the bonds formed between members of a group, particularly military groups. I use comparative material of the German Wehrmacht and other armies to show how comparable situations can be observed in different time periods, and I demonstrate how psychological studies performed upon more modern situations can help to elucidate what is happening in ancient contexts.

Chapter One

Earning Eternal Rome: The Soldier and the Citizen

I. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss popular conceptions about the soldier's place in Rome's inherently militaristic society. I argue that Roman society considered the citizen's contribution to the state as a soldier to be more important and significant than his contribution in any other area. The soldier figure embodied and helped realize Rome's grander aims and ideals. The etiological story of Marcus Curtius exemplifies the centrality of the soldier in Rome's identity by naming the soldier as the core strength of Rome and making the soldier responsible for Rome's eternal destiny. An analysis of the soldier's role in Rome uncovers the deep connection between the soldier figure and ideals of victory and conquest.

While the soldier made his contribution to the state by furthering the cause of Rome's conquests, the state in its turn endeavored to return the soldier safely to his land at the conclusion of his service. The famous story of Cincinnatus demonstrates that the Romans envisioned the citizen's contribution as a soldier as temporary. It is important that, like Cincinnatus, every soldier returned to his plough when he had fulfilled his obligation to the Roman state. Roman culture valued taking care with the soldier's life, and there was no elevated significance attached to death in battle; Roman state and society valued the soldier more as a conqueror and a survivor. As we shall see, a

soldier's scars marked his bravery and proved that he had faced and, more importantly, overcome danger.

After the failed legislation of the Gracchi in the Late Republic, the nature of the dual role of the citizen soldier changed. The legislation of the Gracchi in the Late Republic represents a final, and unsuccessful, attempt to preserve this relationship between citizen and military life. Tiberius Gracchus proposed his agrarian legislation, in response to a perceived shortage in manpower, in such a way as to attempt to restore the traditional role of the soldier as a citizen farmer. Marius' enrollment of the *capite censi* represented a new strategy of making men soldiers first and citizen farmers afterward, obscuring the traditional importance of the fact that it is the citizen who soldiers in order to make his contribution to the state.

II. The roles of the Roman citizen

In Nicolet's survey of the citizen in Republican Rome, he distinguished three major areas of civic engagement: military; fiscal and financial; and deliberative and electoral.¹

Among the three spheres, the citizen's service as a soldier stands out as having the most elevated significance. Military service fulfilled grander ideals and promoted Rome as a nation that would stand eternally in power, strength, and influence. The Roman tradition assumed a military vocation and pervaded the consciousness of her citizens. Rome's

¹ Nicolet (1980), 15.

official martial ideology shaped a society in which “the Roman, any Roman, is first and foremost a warrior, or rather a soldier.”²

The significance attached to the citizen’s contribution as a soldier eclipsed all other civic obligations. In terms of fiscal and financial responsibilities, it is evident and intuitive that taxpaying was not an activity which could rival positively charged perceptions about the soldier. The Roman attitude towards the citizen’s duty as a taxpayer is uniformly negative. Direct taxation was not considered to be a glorious contribution to the health and welfare of the state, but a necessary burden which was imposed on citizens only in times of dire necessity, and dispensed with as soon as possible in favor of finding revenue from military campaigning.³ In 167 B.C. Aemilius Paulus brought so much money to the state treasury from his victory over Perseus of Macedon that no tax was levied from the citizens until the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa in 43 B.C.⁴ Cicero advises in the *De Officiis* that every effort should be made to prevent the necessity for levying tax, which he describes as the imposition of a burden.⁵

There are three reasons why the role of citizen as voter fails to carry the same significance as the soldier. Firstly, in practical terms the citizen was simply more likely to participate in activities in his capacity as a soldier than as a voter, and when he did that contribution was often severely limited by the structure of the assemblies. Secondly, the citizen had often been empowered to his role as voter by his connection with the military; entitled to vote because he was a past, present, or future soldier. This is particularly clear

² Nicolet (1980), 90.

³ On the unpopularity of taxation in Rome, see Nicolet (1980), 149-53; On the system of taxation during the Republic, including laws, practices, and protests, *ibid* 149-206 and Nicolet (1976).

⁴ Plut. *Aem.* 32; Plin. (E) *HN* 33.56; Val. Max. 4.3.8.

⁵ Cic. *De Off.* 2.74.

in an examination of the *comitia centuriata*. Lastly, when we look at the values attached to the soldier figure it is evident that the political contribution of the citizen pales in comparison to the highly charged ideological significance of citizen as soldier.

As a member of the electorate, the citizen was eligible to vote in both of the two major assemblies which existed during the middle and late Republic: the *comitia tributa* and the *comitia centuriata*.⁶ The *comitia tributa* is usually treated as one assembly, although there existed also the *concilium plebis* which was similar in organization and differed only in that it was open to plebeians and excluded the patricians. The *concilium plebis* was often referred to in the ancient sources as the *comitia tributa*, and it has been proposed that they do not in fact represent two distinct bodies.⁷ They will be treated here as the same.

Although the *comitia tributa* dealt with issues of some importance, the influence of the average individual citizen within the assembly was minimal due to the assembly's structure. The *comitia tributa* dealt with the election of minor magistracies such as curule aediles, quaestors, tribunes and aediles of the plebs, and special commissioners.⁸

⁶ In the Early Republic there existed a third assembly, named the *comitia curiata*, which was organized from 30 curiae, ten each from the traditional Roman clan tribes the Tities, Ramnes, and Luceres. This assembly need not be included in the following study, for although its legislative powers, the conferring of the right of *imperium* on the magistrates of the year in a *lex curiata*, continued into the Late Republic, the citizens after a certain period no longer attended the assembly. The curiae were instead represented by one lictor for each tribe. The last known law of the *comitia curiata* dates to 390 B.C., Livy 5.46.10; See Sandberg (2001), 1; 105; for the *comitia curiata* in general see Cornell (1995), 115-7; Taylor (1966), 3-5; Nocera (1940), 1-4; Botsford (1909), 168-200.

⁷ The purpose of the *concilium plebis* was to decide on matters which pertained only to the plebeians, such as the election of tribunes or aediles of the plebs, and legislation proposed by tribunes of the plebs, called *plebiscita*. The relationship between the *concilium plebis* and the *comitia tributa* remains controversial. Mommsen's view was that there were two distinct tribal assemblies in Rome. Mommsen, (1884), 151-66. This became the orthodox viewpoint. See, for example, Nicolet (1976), 304ff.; Crawford (1978), 195; 'comitia', Momigliano and Cornell, OCD³ (1996), 372-3. Contra Develin (1975), (1977); Mitchell (1990), 205; Sandberg (2001), 105-10; Lintott (1999), 53-5.

⁸ This assembly also adjudicated crimes against the state punishable by fine. After the *lex hortensia* of 267 B.C., legislation, or *plebiscita*, passed by this body had the force of law. The *comitia tributa* was presided

It was organized according to tribe, of which there were thirty-five, four urban tribes and thirty one rural tribes. The *comitia tributa* voted tribe by tribe, with each tribe collectively returning one vote until a majority was reached. There was no internal structuring within the tribes by wealth or any other criteria; within the tribe each man had an equal contribution towards deciding the overall stance of that tribe. The influence of the poorer citizens in the *comitia tributa* was limited by two factors: the ability of those citizens to come to Rome to attend the assembly; and the fact that the tribes only voted until a majority had been reached. Most likely on all but very contentious issues, those who came to vote would have been the urban tribes and those living within traveling distance of the city.⁹ Due to these obvious restrictions on the potential influence of the average citizen, some scholars have sought to find the real structures of political power elsewhere, for example Geltzer's argument that they are to be found in social bonds and patron-client relationships, not in the political institutions themselves. Gelzer's view is still defended by Burckhardt and, approaching from a different angle but producing the same result, Vishnia, who argues that the constitutional power of the people was little more than a senatorial device to ensure fair competition in its ranks.¹⁰

over by the consul or praetor, and in the case of legislation pertaining to the plebs only, the tribune or aedile of the plebs.

⁹ Where scholars have argued for influence on the part of individual voting citizens, it is not on the basis of their contribution as it appears on paper, but in terms of their practical influence in terms of exerting pressure by public demonstration of opinions. This viewpoint is championed in particular by Millar, whose sequence of articles and publications argue that the popular element of the Roman system wielded an influence in practical terms which was more encompassing than the technical systems of the assemblies would suggest. Millar (1998); (1995); (1989); (1986); (1984). North and Perelli have also argued that the Roman political system can be considered to have a certain democratic character, and Yakobson has approached the problem by investigating why the aristocratic element solicited the support of the commons in elections, arguing that the practice indicates that the commons exerted influence. North (1990a); (1990b); Perelli (1982); Yakobson (1999).

¹⁰ Gelzer (1912); Burckhardt (1990); Vishnia (1996).

In a practical sense, in a Republican Rome almost constantly at war, the average citizen was far more likely to serve as a legionary than to vote in an election. Precise numbers of voting citizens are difficult to determine because no ancient writer ever recorded the number of votes or voters in an election. Millar estimates that in the Late Republic only one in forty-five of the entitled citizen body would have voted at any one time, which gives a percentage figure of about 2% of all adult male citizens.¹¹ The meager evidence which we possess for the Mid Republic points to voters numbering only a few thousand. The well publicized and controversial land bill of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 B.C. attracted “many thousands”, and he supposedly had 3,000 supporters with him when he died.¹² But even if we double this figure to account for the opposing side, we have, for a highly charged bill, 6,000 voters, barely more than a legion, and less than 2% of the adult male population.¹³ This figure is put in startling perspective when held up in comparison to even very rough estimates of the number of citizen men under arms at various points during the 2nd century. The numbers and percentages of citizens serving in the army are many times higher than the number of voters.¹⁴ During the Punic Wars the figures are around 25% of the adult male population.¹⁵ The level varies in the years

¹¹ Millar (1998), 37. The Late Republican electorate, however, included the enfranchised Italians after the Social War, and so we might expect the figures for the Middle Republic to be higher in terms of percentage if not actual numbers, since the Italians represent a voting population which was geographically distant from Rome.

¹² Diod. 34/35.6; Plut. *Ti Gracchus* 20.3.

¹³ Nicolet (1980), 293-4.

¹⁴ Two sets of figures are used, the population of Rome given by the census, and the number of men serving in the legions. De Ligt in his article “Roman manpower and recruitment” provides a table of the census figures given, mainly by Livy, from the years 265 B.C. – A.D. 14. de Ligt (2007), 118. I compare the census figures to estimations of the total number of legionaries serving in a year, and for this I use Brunt’s *Italian Manpower*.

¹⁵ In the census of 204/3, Livy records the population as 214,000 (29.37). Brunt gives the number of legions under arms in 204 as 19, which he calculates to be approximately 55,000 soldiers. Brunt has adjusted the figure of 4,500 men which was standard for a legion to accommodate what he terms

200 B.C. – 168 B.C., but only once in around a hundred years does it drop as low as about 5% of the population.¹⁶ These figures are estimated conservatively, but still clearly eclipse the kinds of numbers which are attached to voting populations.

The powers of the *comitia centuriata* represent another facet of the central role of the military not just to Roman society as a whole, but to the individual whose identity as a soldier governed a large part of his potential political contribution. In the *comitia centuriata* the citizen right of making a political contribution was derived from that citizen's military association. The *comitia centuriata* operated under regulations which are familiar to us from the army. They are often referred to as being the same body, for example, Livy references the army being led out to this assembly.¹⁷ It also seems that the *comitia centuriata* was sometimes simply referred to as the 'army' [*exercitus*].¹⁸ It was, moreover, unlawful to either assemble or make requests of this body within the bounds of the *pomerium*. If the *pomerium* marked the boundaries between military and civilian life, then making the citizens physically leave the city to assemble for voting in the same

"wastage", or the number of casualties in battle and men lost to disease over the period that the legion was in service. This is a startling 25.7 percent of the adult male population. Brunt allows for variants in his numbers of as high as ten percent. If we take from Brunt the lowest figures that he might be prepared to accept; a conservative estimate of 49,500 soldiers after deducting the ten percent variance, this still gives us a figure of 23.1%. Brunt (1971b), 418-20.

¹⁶ In the years 200 – 168 B.C., Brunt's figures vary from 33,000 in the year 199 B.C., to 71,500 in the year 190 B.C. When compared to the census figures closest to these years, these numbers produce percentages of around 28% and 15%. Conservative estimates from somewhat peaceful years can drop these figures below ten percent, but only very temporarily. In the early 150s, when we can confirm that the Romans fielded four legions, at a normal strength of 5,200 men per legion, these men still comprise about 5% of the population, and the number of active legions does not drop this low again until the 120s. Brunt (1971b), 427.

¹⁷ Livy 39.15.11: maiores uestri ne uos quidem, nisi cum aut uexillo in arce posito comitiorum causa exercitus eductus esset, aut plebi concilium tribuni edixissent, aut aliquis ex magistratibus ad contionem uocasset, forte temere coire uoluerunt.

¹⁸ Varro *Ling.* 6.88; Gell. 15.27.5; Macr. 1.16.15; Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.1., cf. Rosenstein (1990), 55.

manner as they assembled for war is a striking indication of how closely the two were associated.

The *comitia centuriata* was organized by century, an ancient division of the citizens into military units which was traditionally held to go back to Servius Tullius' organization of the army.¹⁹ There were 193 centuries, divided into 18 centuries of *equites*, 170 of *pedites*, and 5 unarmed centuries (artisans and musicians) according to the early structure of the army.²⁰ The *comitia centuriata* appears so deeply military in character that some scholars have doubted the early legislation which is attributed to it which does not pertain to the military, such as the *lex XII tabularum* of 450 B.C., the *lex Valeria de provocatione* of 509 B.C., and the *lex Valeria Horatia de plebiscitis* of 449 B.C.²¹ The *comitia centuriata* elected the highest magistrates in the state, the consuls, praetors, and every five years, the censors. This body was responsible for electing the magistrates with *imperium*, or the power to command the soldiers.²² The *comitia*

¹⁹ Livy 1.42. The urban plebs had notoriously little influence in the *comitia centuriata*, especially after 241 B.C. when the centuries of *pedites* became divisions of the tribes, and were separated according to age and property qualifications. Lintott (1999), 60-1; (1990), 11; (1994), 43-4; Cornell (1995), 186; Sandberg (1993), 84-5; Brunt (1988), 429; Vanderbroeck (1987), 163; Nicolet (1976), 419; Veyne (1976), 425; Gruen (1974), 122; Lowenstein (1973), 132; Wiseman (1971), 125.

²⁰ Livy 1.43; Dion. Hal. 4.21.

²¹ Livy 3.34.6; Dion. Hal. 10.57.6; Cic. Rep. 2.53; Val. Max. 4.1.1; Livy 3.55.1; Dion. Hal. 11.45.1. The *Lex XII tabularum* (a set of laws) are referred to also as *Leges Decemvires*, *Lex Decemviris*, *Leges XII* or simply *Leges* and *Lex*. Mitchell has argued that military politics, like the military itself, was restricted to being conducted outside the *pomerium*, and that the *comitia centuriata* passed no non-military legislation at all, including these somewhat controversial laws. Mitchell (1990), especially 199 and 221-54; cf. Sandberg (2001), 123-31. For the contrary argument that the *comitia centuriata* passed limited civil legislation in an early period of its history, see Watson (1974), 7ff. Sandberg (2001), 123-31.

²² The fact that the assembly was responsible for the election of the censors was for a similar reason. Each assembly elected the magistrates that were responsible for that assembly in some fashion, usually presiding over it, and the censor was responsible for maintaining the official list of citizens who made up the *comitia centuriata*. Over time the *comitia centuriata*'s powers of legislation were increasingly transferred to the *comitia tributa*. It is perhaps indicative of its military nature that the powers this body retained into the second century B.C. pertained to two areas; its own maintenance, in that it elected the censors and confirmed their powers, and war, in that it continued to elect magistrates with the right of *imperium*, and it was responsible for declarations of war. See Taylor (1966), 3ff.

centuriata was made up of past, present, or future soldiers, and so it legislated about matters pertaining to the citizen's role as a soldier. The political contribution which the individual made in the *comitia centuriata* was physically done in a time of peace, when the citizen was technically civilian. At the same time, he could only complete his citizen duties in this assembly with reference to his soldier's identity. The contribution of the citizen in this context cannot be fully extracted or distinguished from the contribution of the soldier.

III. The Significance of the Soldier

The citizen in his role as soldier is linked to the larger and grander concepts of Rome's greatness, power, and destiny. One story in particular is highly suggestive of the central role that the soldier played in Rome's self-definition: the tale of Marcus Curtius. This tale is narrated in detail by Livy, and there is every reason to believe that it was widely familiar. It is first attested in the first century B.C. writer Proculus, and it also appears in a variety of other writers.²³ The best evidence of the fame of this story, however, comes from the Roman forum, where a relief depicting Curtius was found in 1553 between the column of Phocas and the temple of Castor.²⁴ It appears to be a later copy of a 2nd

²³ It is Varro who tells us that Proculus, a historian contemporary with Cicero, related this tale: Varro *Ling.* 5.148. Other versions: Dion. Hal. 14.11.3-4; Val. Max. 5.6.2; Plin. (E) *HN* 15.78; Cass. Dio fr. 30.1-2; Zonaras 7.25; Orosius 3.5.

²⁴ In the Palazzo dei Conservatori, now in Braccio Nuovo, Sala I. See Jones (1926), Vol.2: 404, no. I602. Harrison (1972) observes that the horse of Curtius bears a striking resemblance to those depicted on the south frieze of the Nike temple, and argues that the style comes from the common source of the depiction of the battle of Marathon in the stoa Poikile. The parallel between this relief and those representing horses in battle further reinforces the figure of Curtius as performing the act as a soldier.

century B.C. original.²⁵ It depicts Curtius astride a horse in mid-leap, in full armor and holding a shield. This highly visible depiction in the very center of Rome, where Curtius was supposed to have performed his deed, would have been a constant reminder to the people of the heroic ideals underlying Rome's character. The story goes that in 362 B.C., a violent earthquake caused a large chasm to open in the forum. When the concerned Romans consulted the seers [*vates*] they were told that the gods demanded the sacrifice of Rome's greatest strength. If they performed this sacrifice, Rome would be eternal [*perpetuus*].

Already, several elements of this story are notable. Firstly, the stakes in the incident are extremely high. This is no normal omen to be expiated to assuage the anger of the gods. The fact that the earthquake ripped a chasm in the Roman forum, the center of Rome itself, is the first clue that something extremely important is happening in the story. Then we are told that in expiating the prodigy, the Romans will not simply placate the gods, they will in fact gain a boon from their sacrifice--to have the Roman state stand for eternity and to secure her future for all time. With such an important matter hanging in the balance, it is hardly surprising that we are told that the Romans hesitated. In Livy's detailed account of the story, Marcus Curtius stepped forward and took matters into his own hands. Livy describes the story as follows:

The story goes on that M. Curtius, a youth distinguished in war, indignantly asked those who were in doubt what answer to give, whether anything that Rome possessed was more precious than the arms and valor of her sons. As those around stood silent, he looked up to the Capitol and to the temples of the immortal gods which looked down on the Forum, and stretching out his hands first towards heaven and then to the yawning chasm beneath, devoted himself

²⁵ Giuliani and Verduchi (1987), 133.

to the gods below. Then mounting his horse, which had been caparisoned as magnificently as possible, he leaped in full armor into the cavern.²⁶

The real and pressing significance of this story is that the Romans are being asked to define themselves, to give a response to a fundamental question about their own society. In isolating one element within their country and privileging it above any other, the Romans are being asked to choose their true nature. The answer, however, presents itself in the figure of Marcus Curtius, who willingly steps forward to give his life for his country. As the chasm closes over Curtius, Rome's future is secured, the forum made whole again symbolizing "the city's Republican heart being made impenetrable."²⁷ It is the fact that the story takes place in the forum that is striking for the idea of the soldier figure and the citizen: the forum is the center of citizen space. Curtius defies the traditional division of civilian and military space marked by the *pomerium* when he stands armed in the forum. Much is at stake here: military necessity invades a civilian space, and the individual citizen makes his most noble contribution by becoming a soldier.

The tale belongs to a genre of *devotio* stories, the major elements of which are always the same: the figure performing the *devotio* dedicates his life in exchange for a civic or military collective.²⁸ The individual thus separates himself from the community

²⁶ Livy 7.6: Tum M. Curtium, iuuenem bello egregium, castigasse ferunt dubitantes an ullum magis Romanum bonum quam arma uirtusque esset, et silentio facto templa deorum immortalium, quae foro imminet, Capitoliumque intuentem et manus nunc in caelum, nunc in patentes terrae hiatus ad deos manes porrigentem, se deuouisse; equo deinde quam poterat maxime exornato insidentem, armatum se in specum immisisse.

²⁷ Spencer (2007), 80.

²⁸ The formula is given by Livy at 8.9.6-8. See also Feldherr (1998), 85-92; Versnel (1981).

for the purpose of preserving that community.²⁹ Versnel has argued that this type of *devotio* originates in a practice of evoking the gods by devoting to them the lives and property of the enemy.³⁰ In both its origins and the version found in the Roman stories, the *devotio* attempts to secure victory for the Romans performing the rite. Similarly, Curtius takes the fate of the Roman soldier upon his own shoulders and dies voluntarily so that future soldiers need not, but instead will conquer and kill their enemies. Curtius' sacrifice enables Rome to stand eternally, and it makes the figure of the soldier responsible for that eternity. The story isolates the soldier as the most essential element of the entire Roman state. There could scarcely be more powerful evidence of just how central a contribution the figure of the soldier was thought to provide.

In addition, it does not seem that the Romans of the Republic envisioned the contribution of the soldier to be greater if he died for this country than if he fought and lived. The famous line of Horace, "it is a beautiful and fitting thing to die for one's country,"³¹ naturally comes to mind in this context, but there are many reasons to doubt its sincerity. Horace's attitude towards the military is revealed in his own account of his conduct at Philippi, where, he tells us, he himself threw away his shield and fled.³² Elsewhere he ridicules Iccius the scholar for leaving his studies of philosophy to go to

²⁹ Feldherr (1998), 88-9; Versnel (1981), 148-52. In some sources, the *devotio* is described as the dedication of the head [*caput*] which led Wagenvoort to argue that the rite is in essence a religious version of the *capitis diminutio maxima*; the complete loss of citizen rites: Wagenvoort (1947), 32.

³⁰ Versnel (1976), who cites this formula as given by Macrobius, Sat.3.9.9ff.

³¹ Hor. *Carm.* 3.2: dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori.

³² Hor. *Carm.* 2.7.9-13. The statement certainly owes something to Archilochus, who wrote of abandoning his shield in battle to save his own life (fr. 6). Like Archilochus, Horace is making himself an anti-hero by refusing to conform to the values of his time: compare, for example, the Spartan adage that one must retain one's shield or die in the process (Plut. *Mor.* 241).

war.³³ Horace was mocking a more orthodox view, that the Roman soldier's duty was to subordinate his private life to the needs of the state.

IV. Cincinnatus and the Soldier's Temporary Condition

The military required the soldier to serve for a period of time which was bounded and defined. During that time, he was to be successful in his capacity as a soldier; he would both survive his military service and be a conqueror of others. This arrangement was reciprocal: while the citizen gave his time and effort, and risked his life as a contribution to the state's destiny, the state endeavored to return the citizen to his land once that obligation had been fulfilled; it therefore attached great value to the life of the soldier that had been temporarily given over into its care.

In the year 403 B.C., the Romans were engaged in a bitter war against Veii. Still occupied with the siege of that city at the end of the campaigning season, the generals decided for the first time to extend their efforts into the winter. This incident, according to Livy, provoked a debate between the tribunes of the plebs in the city and the military tribunes, all of whom were patricians. Soldiers had recently been granted pay, and the tribunes of the plebs suspected that this boon had not come for free, but was now being used to force the soldiers into longer service. The military tribune Appius Claudius Crassus addressed the complaints, making reference to the former arrangement in which the soldiers had been unpaid:

³³ Hor. *Carm.* 1.29.

Nowhere do we find labor without its reward, nor, as a rule, reward without some expenditure of labor. Toil and pleasure, utterly dissimilar by nature, have been brought by nature into a kind of partnership with each other. Formerly, the soldier felt it a grievance that he gave his services to the State at his own cost, he had the satisfaction, however, of cultivating his land for a part of the year, and acquiring the means of supporting himself and his family whether he were at home or on service.³⁴

Crassus frames the soldier's service as part of a reciprocal relationship between soldier and state. Military service is a labor, an unfortunate obligation, and its reward is that after it is completed each year the soldier is at liberty to pursue his own personal interests. Although the soldier figure's deeds are often characterized as voluntary heroism, the soldier need not approve of or enjoy his service.³⁵ As Crassus goes on to argue when he addresses the question of service extending into the winter, it is loyalty and citizen obligation which compels the soldier to fight:

If the State were to call him to an exact reckoning, would it not be justified in saying, 'You receive a year's pay, put in a year's work. Do you think it fair to receive a whole twelve-month's pay for six months' service?' It is with reluctance, Quirites, that I dwell on this topic, for it is those who employ mercenaries who ought to deal thus with them, but we want to deal with you as with fellow-citizens, and we think it only fair that you should deal with us as with your fatherland.³⁶

The soldier's obligation rests not upon compulsion but upon his emotional or sentimental relationship with the state. Unlike a mercenary, it is the soldier's investment in the state,

³⁴ Livy 5.4.4-5: Labor uoluptasque, dissimillima natura, societate quadam inter se naturali sunt iuncta. Molestae antea ferebat miles se suo sumptu operam rei publicae praebere; gaudebat idem partem anni se agrum suum colere, quaerere unde domi militiaeque se ac suos tueri posset.

³⁵ For voluntary heroism, see further Chapter Two below.

³⁶ Livy 5.4.7-8: An si ad calculos eum res publica uocet, non merito dicat: "annua aera habes, annuam operam ede: an tu aequum censes militia semestri solidum te stipendium accipere?" Inuitus in hac parte orationis, Quirites, moror; sic enim agere debent qui mercenario milite utuntur; nos tamquam cum ciuibus agere uolumus, aequum tamquam cum patria nobiscum aequum censemus.

his identity as a Roman, or as Crassus has it, as a “fellow citizen” [*civis*] which ought to motivate him to do his best for Rome. Crassus appeals to a higher cause; each soldier’s connection to his *patria*.

In this story, the tribunes of the plebs come forward to defend the temporary nature of the service. That the soldier’s contribution was limited in this fashion, and he would be allowed to return to his farm, was a deeply held ideological assumption. Just as the soldier’s role in Rome’s destiny was explained in the story of Marcus Curtius, the soldier’s temporary contribution finds its archetype in the tale of a very famous figure of the Republic, L. Quinctius Cincinnatus.

Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus both tell the story of Cincinnatus, in which the consular army 458 B.C. under Lucius Minucius was blockaded and entrapped in its own camp by an invading army of Aequians.³⁷ When the other consul, Gaius Nautius, proved unequal to the situation, the senate voted to appoint a dictator to manage the crisis. They chose Cincinnatus, who had been the consul of the year 460 B.C., and sent a delegation to summon him. It is critically important for this story’s symbolic and heroic dimensions that the delegation discovered him at the plough:

The one hope of Rome, L. Quinctius, used to cultivate a four *iugera* field on the other side of the Tiber... There he was found by the deputation from the senate either digging out a ditch or ploughing, at all events, as is generally agreed, intent on his husbandry. After mutual salutations he was requested to put on his toga that he might hear the mandate of the senate, and they expressed the hope that it might turn out well for him and for the State. He asked them, in surprise, if all was well, and bade his wife, Racilia, bring him his toga quickly from the cottage. Wiping off the dust and perspiration, he put it on and came forward, on which the deputation saluted him as Dictator and

³⁷ Livy 3.26; Dion. Hal. 10.23.5-24.2.

congratulated him, invited him to the city and explained the state of apprehension in which the army were.³⁸

It is a moment of transition which Livy captures here. When the Roman man was a private citizen during the winter, he was concerned only with his farm and his family, but when he entered upon military service he became a part of the larger and grander ideals attached to the soldier figure. In the same way, Livy emphasizes the modesty of Cincinnatus' small holding--a mere four *iugera* of land, which enhances the contrast between this and his elevation to the highest position in the state a few moments later, when the delegation salutes him.³⁹ The inclusion of the presence of his wife, and the fact that she is named, also emphasizes the change from his individualistic pursuit to acting in the capacity of, as Crassus said, a "citizen". Cincinnatus' donning of the toga marks someone engaged making an active contribution to the *res publica*. The toga is mentioned several times; when the delegation request that he wears it before they divulge their message, when Cincinnatus sends his wife to retrieve the item, and when, upon donning the toga, the deputation salutes him as Dictator. The fact that he wipes off the dust and sweat before he puts on the toga is highly suggestive of the symbolic nature of the gesture--he is exchanging the farmer's adornment of sweat and dust for the mark of the citizen in service.

³⁸ Livy 3.26: *Spes unica imperii populi Romani, L. Quinctius trans Tiberim.... Ibi ab legatis—seu fossam fodiens palae innixus, seu cum araret, operi certe, id quod constat, agresti intentus—salute data in uicem redditaque rogatus ut, quod bene uerteret ipsi rei publicae, togatus mandata senatus audiret, admiratus rogatusque 'satin salue?' Togam propere e tugurio proferre uxorem Raciliam iubet. Qua simul absterso puluere ac sudore uelatus processit, dictatorem eum legati gratulantes consalutant, in urbem uocant; qui terror sit in exercitu exponunt.*

³⁹ Cincinnatus' poverty was a well-known part of the story, as reflected in his mention in Valerius Maximus, 4.7.4.

There are other details to the Cincinnatus story which indicate that part of the fame of Cincinnatus was because he agreed to return to the state's service although not obliged, and indeed made sacrifices in order to do so. Just as the tribunes were to argue in 403 B.C., there were limits to the demands the state could make on its citizens. Cincinnatus had already refused a second term as consul for 459 B.C., and he laid down the dictatorship to which he was appointed after sixteen days.⁴⁰ Cincinnatus wished to return to his farm as soon as his task was complete, showing that he had no lust for power, but reinforcing also the principle that service was a duty and it was demanded from its citizens only temporarily. In Dionysius' version of the story, Cincinnatus even reacts with some annoyance to his call to the state's service, and complains, "This year's crop too will be ruined, then, because of my official duties, and we shall all go dreadfully hungry."⁴¹ He is also said to have been reluctant to take a second Dictatorship offered to him in 439 B.C. Cincinnatus thinks it somewhat unfair that his life should be put in jeopardy once more. Livy writes that, "Quinctius at first refused, and asked what they meant by exposing him at the end of his life to so fierce a struggle."⁴² The story of Cincinnatus shows that there were simply limits to the demands that the Roman state could make of its soldiers.

V. The Soldier as Survivor-Conqueror

⁴⁰ Livy 3.21.5; 3.29.7.

⁴¹ Dion. Hal. 10.24.2-3: Ἀπολείται ἄρα καὶ τοῦτου τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ὁ καρπὸς διὰ τὰς ἐμὰς ἀσχολίας, καὶ πεινῆσομεν ἅπαντες κακῶς.

⁴² Livy 4.13.12: Adprobantibus cunctis, primo Quinctius abnuere et quid sibi vellent rogare qui se aetate exacta tantae dimicationi obicerent.

If part of the ideology of the soldier figure was that after he made his contribution he returned to his farm, then the state's obligation was to allow him to do so; this meant endeavoring to return him alive. The prevailing sentiment in Roman culture was not to consider the soldier a disposable commodity, but to take every care for his life. Three facets of Roman thinking will serve to illustrate this point: firstly, that the Romans attached greater value to the figure of the soldier as a conqueror and survivor than if he died for his country; secondly, that it reflected well on a general if he kept his casualty figures as low as possible; and lastly, that the historical trope of the soldier showing his scars indicates that the ideal soldier put himself in peril, but emerged triumphant from that danger, ultimately surviving to tell the tale.

For the Romans, living to fight again was of greater value, which can be illustrated in reference to a fragment of Cato which survives to us in Aulus Gellius' *Attic Nights*. Cato tells the tale of a Roman army fighting in Sicily during the first Punic war. All the advantageous territory had already been occupied by the enemy force, which had arrived in the area first, and the Romans found themselves surrounded. According to Cato, a tribune came to the commander with a suggestion of a way out of the problem. He proposed sending four hundred soldiers to an elevated position where they would attract attack from the enemy soldiers and allow the rest of the army to retreat to safety. The military tribune who suggested the plan also volunteered to lead the expedition. The plan worked but the soldiers were massacred, all save the tribune himself:

Although he was wounded there many times, nonetheless his head remained unscathed and he was recognized among the dead, exhausted by his wounds and loss of blood. He was picked up, and he recovered again and afterwards

served the state frequently through brave and bold deeds. By diverting those soldiers he saved the rest of the army.⁴³

In the story, although four hundred Roman soldiers lose their lives, Cato passes over them with no remark and directs his attention and praise towards the one tribune who survived. The four hundred gave their lives for the rest of the army, but for Cato the true value in the story lies in the soldier who had put himself in mortal peril and emerged victorious, living to fight again and giving not just a one-off boon to his country, but continued service. For the Romans, the soldier did not make his greatest contribution by dying, but by helping Rome conquer.

In the normal course of affairs at Rome, it was desirable that the army would be victorious with little or no loss to their side. The Roman system required that reports returned to the senate qualified the battle's outcome with an account of both enemy and allied casualties. A law passed in 62 B.C. proposed penalties for commanders who falsely reported these numbers, and required returning generals to swear before the urban quaestors that both numbers were accurate.⁴⁴ Although the requirements for a triumph only stipulated that the number of enemy casualties should surpass five thousand, it seems that it was highly prejudicial to a commander to have sustained heavy losses on the Roman side.⁴⁵ In 197 B.C., Q. Minucius Rufus' application for a triumph was attacked by the tribunes, who declared the very request "shameless" [*impudenter*]. The force of

⁴³ Gellius 3.7 (= HRR I² [1914] fr.83). Translation from Von Albrecht (1989), 22-3. Cum saucius multifariam ibi factus esset, tamen volnus capiti nullum evenit, eumque inter mortuos defetigatum vulneribus atque, quod sanguen eius defluerat, cognovere. Eum sustulere, isque convaluit, saepeque postilla operam reipublicae fortem atque strenuam perhibuit illoque facto, quod illos milites subduxit, exercitum ceterum servavit.

⁴⁴ Val. Max. 2.8.1. The law is credited to L. Marius and M. Cato, plebeian tribunes in that year.

⁴⁵ Val. Max. 2.8.1; Oros. 5.4.7. The date of this law is unknown, but its spirit- the idea that the battles for which the triumph was granted ought to be significant victories- is upheld throughout the Republic.

the attack is that Minucius had achieved little, and yet lost much, including some men of high rank:

Q. Minucius, they declared, had fought some insignificant actions, hardly worth talking about, amongst the Ligurians and had lost a large number of men in Gaul. Two military tribunes, T. Juventius and Gnaeus Ligurius, both attached to the fourth legion, had fallen in an unsuccessful battle in company with many other brave men, both citizens and allies.⁴⁶

It is significant that the tribunes of the plebs attacked the request for a triumph so vehemently, and that they declared it insulting. Tribunes were charged with looking after the interests of the people, and they clearly considered it to be an affront that Minucius, who had caused such a heavy loss of life, should ask to parade his achievement in front of those people. The tribunes also cite the names of two military tribunes along with their legionary affiliation, a measure, perhaps, designed to lend impact and a sense of immediacy at the mention of personal names. Significant, too, is the fact that it does not seem to matter exactly how many men had been killed in Gaul. The idea that “a large number” [*magnum numerum*] had been killed was sufficiently shocking, especially when contrasted to the insignificant achievements of the rest of the campaign. Similarly criticized for allowing an inordinate amount of Roman casualties was L. Cornelius Merula in 193 B.C., whose own legate, M. Claudius Marcellus, wrote to individual senators complaining about the commander’s conduct. Merula was apparently guilty of systematically causing the death of his men due to his own ineptitude:

All the consul had done was to lose a large number of his men and let the enemy slip out of his hands when he had the chance of annihilating them. His

⁴⁶ Livy 33.22: Q. Minucium in Liguribus leuia proelia uix digna dictu fecisse, in Gallia magnum numerum militum amisisse; nominabant etiam tribunos militum T. Iuuentium Cn. Ligurium legionis quartae: aduersa pugna cum multis aliis uiris fortibus, ciuibus ac sociis, cecidisse.

losses were mainly due to the delay in bringing up the reserves to relieve the first line, which was being overpowered.⁴⁷

This last comment refers to the Roman practice of substituting weary soldiers in the front line with fresh troops from behind, a maneuver which the manipular legion was designed to be able to perform so that the army was never disadvantaged by fighting with tired men. The implication of this complaint is that Merula was mishandling an entirely standard operation and in doing so, was responsible for the deaths of the soldiers.

The quality of a general's success, based on a mediation between the victory won on the one hand, and the manpower expended in order to bring about that victory on the other, is a common feature of Roman historical narrative. For example, Livy describes the revolt of Fidenae to the Veientes in 437 B.C., causing the consular army of L. Sergius Fidenas to fight a costly battle with the two nations. The battle, Livy tells us, was the first success on the Roman side of the Anio river, but the human cost of the victory outweighed its glory: "his victory was not bloodless, and so there was more grief for the citizens lost than rejoicing over the defeat of the enemy."⁴⁸ It is not until the next encounter that the loss of citizen life is expunged or "made good" [*expletus*].⁴⁹ It is

⁴⁷ Livy 35.6 : consulis opera et militum aliquantum amissum et hostium exercitum, cuius delendi oblata fortuna fuerit, elapsum. milites eo plures perisse quod tardius ex subsidiis qui laborantibus opem ferrent successissent.

⁴⁸ Livy 4.17.8: ...nec incruentam uictoriam rettulit. maior itaque ex ciuibz amissis dolor quam laetitia fuis hostibus fuit. Cf. Sall. *Cat.* 58, in which Catiline urges his men to die fighting, and hence make the enemy's victory "bloody and mournful" [*cruentam atque luctuosam*].

⁴⁹ Cf. Livy 8.29.12-13, in which the troops are said to fight to revenge their own personal wounds from a previous battle.

frequently the level of loss of human life which marks the degree to which a victory can be positively expressed.⁵⁰

The language used in the historical accounts reflect this value. The adjectives “bloody” or “bloodless” [*cruentus/ incruentus*] are frequently attested with either the word “victory” [*victoria*] in the sense of bloody or bloodless victory, and also with “army” [*exercitus*] or “soldiers” [*milites*] to mean that these remained unharmed or untouched. Combinations of these words are found describing the preservation of the lives of his soldiers as the mark of a superior general: Livy describes Alexander conquering Darius in a “bloodless” fashion⁵¹; Sallust attributes an extremely low casualty rate to the army of Marius⁵²; and Tacitus contrasts the slaughter of German tribesmen with a victory which was “not bloody” for Germanicus’ army.⁵³ The Roman soldier was by no means considered to be a disposable commodity. The death of troops in battle was not par for the course, but ought to be minimized as far as it was possible to do so; greater glory attended on the commander who returned his troops with few losses. This attitude is reflected in Caesar’s famous boast regarding his victory over Pharnices II of Pontus,

⁵⁰ For example, see Livy 9.12.3-4 on the victory of the Samnites at the Caudine forks, described as “bloodless”; Livy 7.8.6-7 for the Roman victory over the Hernici, which is qualified by the loss of a quarter of the infantry and a number of the cavalry; Flor. 1.3.6 for Pompey’s predecessor against the pirate threat, P. Servilius, whose victories were considered only marginal because of the loss of life they caused; see also examples in the following paragraph.

⁵¹ Livy 9.17.16: *praedam uerius quam hostem, nihil aliud quam bene ausus uana contemnere, incruentus deuicit*. “He [Alexander] found him [Darius] to be rather booty than enemy, and conquered him bloodlessly merely by daring to despise vanity.”

⁵² Sall. *Iug.* 92: *Postquam tantam rem Marius sine ullo suorum incommodo peregit, magnus et clarus antea, maior atque clarior haberi coepit... denique multis locis potitus ac plerisque exercitu incruento aliam rem aggreditur*. “Marius was great and famous before, but after he won such success without loss to his own men he came to be held even greater and more famous... finally after capturing many places often with his army unharmed, he attempted another feat...” cf. Servius’ commentary on Book XI, line 421 of the Aeneid: *et hoc est unde laudat Sallustius duces, qui victoriam incruento exercitu reportauerunt*.

⁵³ Tac. *Ann.* 2.18.1: *Magna ea victoria neque cruenta nobis fuit*. “The victory was great and not costly to our forces.”

veni, vidi, vici, which represented the Roman ideal, not epic battle in the Homeric style, but an efficient and painless *blitzkrieg*.⁵⁴

It was therefore part of Roman culture to value the bloodless victory, and the mark of a good general that he kept his casualty figures low. The individual soldier performed his part in this not by avoiding risks, but by exposing himself to danger and emerging victorious from it. This can be illustrated by a discussion of one particular trope of Roman historical discourse; the prevalence of the scar as the soldier's symbol. We gain a better understanding of why the scar is so important through a comment of the younger Seneca, who explains the relationship between suffering and glory:

Virtus is eager for danger and thinks rather of its goal than of what it may have to suffer, since even what it will have to suffer is a part of its glory. Warriors glory in their wounds and rejoice to display the blood spilled with luckier fortune. Those who return from the battle unhurt may have fought as well, but the man who returns with a wound wins the greater regard.⁵⁵

The idea of suffering augments the value attached to the practice of fighting, for the wound confirms that the task which the soldier achieved was not easy, but rather both difficult and dangerous. The unhurt soldier and the wounded soldier may, as Seneca says, have accomplished the same task. In fact, we might suspect the unhurt soldier was the more skilled. But the deed attracts more glory if it is difficult and dangerous, and the wound proves both; the opponent was no cowardly weakling to be dispatched before he had thrown a blow. The scar symbolizes the behavior of the soldier in battle, who put

⁵⁴ Suet. *Iul.* 37. Compare the more modern "Powell Doctrine" which emphasizes the need for overwhelming force in order to achieve a swift victory.

⁵⁵ Sen. *Prov.* 4.4: Auida est periculi uirtus et quo tendat, non quid passura sit cogitat, quoniam etiam quod passura est gloriae pars est. Militares uiri gloriantur uulneribus, laeti fluentem meliori casu sanguinem ostentant: idem licet fecerint qui integri reuertuntur ex acie, magis spectatur qui saucius redit.

himself in danger, and perhaps more importantly, successfully mastered that danger.⁵⁶ In this way, the scar is evidence of a situation which is in the past, and derives its meaning from suffering and pain, but also from the fact that it proves success and overcoming of significant difficulties. This success is integral to the model of the bloodless victory. Roman soldiers are not supposed die gloriously, and nor are they supposed to shirk danger. They are supposed to throw themselves into danger and win.

An example of the scar being used as proof that the soldier is successful, and a conqueror of others, occurs in 167 B.C., when Marcus Servilius engaged in a debate in the senate with Servius Sulpicius Galba. The debate concerned the request for a triumph submitted by Aemilius Paulus; according to Livy, Aemilius' soldiers had refused to support the request because they were incensed that he had not allowed them enough booty during their campaign in Macedonia. Servius Sulpicius Galba, who had been a military tribune in this campaign and had stirred up much of the dissent against Paullus, spoke against the triumph.⁵⁷ Servilius then stood up to speak against him, making a long rebuttal of Sulpicius' claims, at the end of which he compared himself to Sulpicius as a soldier. As proof of his superiority, he pointed to the evidence of his own body:

“He has learnt nothing but speech-making, and that only to insult and abuse. I have fought twenty three times in answer to challenges; from all whom I encountered I carried off the spoils. My body is covered with honorable scars, every one received in front.” It is said that he then stripped himself and explained in what war each had been received.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Cf. Baroin (2002), 27- 46.

⁵⁷ Livy 45.35.

⁵⁸ Livy 35.39: ille nihil praeterquam loqui, et <id> ipsum maledice ac maligne, [didicit] ego ter et uiciens cum hoste ex prouocatione pugnaui; ex omnibus, cum quibus manum conserui, spolia rettuli; insigne corpus honestis cicatricibus, omnibus aduerso corpore exceptis, habeo.' nudasse deinde se dicitur et, quo quaeque bello uolnera accepta essent, rettulisse.

Servilius begins by denying Sulpicius' ability as a soldier- though a military tribune, he is a better speaker than doer of deeds. Servilius, however, points to two pieces of evidence of his own honorable soldiering: the fact that he has accepted many challenges to single combat and won them all, and the fact that he can display scars on the front of his body. In the first of these, Servilius is claiming prowess and skill as a soldier. He implies bravery in accepting the challenges, but emphasizes the fact that he was victorious in these combats. He follows that thought with the mention of his scars and their position on the front of his body. Only scars on the front are considered to be valid and honorable [*honestis*], since the position of the scar is an indicator of how the soldier was behaving when the scar was received. Scars on the back are valueless and dishonorable because that type of wound is received when fleeing and turning one's back on the enemy. Scars on the front, on the other hand, prove that the soldier was wounded fighting an enemy who stood before him. Servilius goes on to strip himself and show these scars to his audience, and the fact that he displays these scars, instead of simply relating the tale, is particularly important in establishing his credentials. The scar acts as a means of translating his former deeds into political currency. The original deeds are in the past and have been performed on various campaigns far from Rome, and are thus temporally and geographically distant from Servilius' current audience. In order to make these past acts meaningful to the present, Servilius needs to couple the physical proof of his bravery with the accompanying description of the acts. The story alone is not enough.

VI. Tiberius Gracchus and the Soldier Citizen

In his *Life of Marius*, Plutarch writes that Marius enrolled the poor into the army for the first time, contrary to tradition. This tradition existed, he explains, predicated on the belief that soldiering was an honor restricted to those with a certain standing in society, and that wealth was considered a token of commitment. Since we know that Marius enrolled the landless or *capite censi*, we can understand this to mean that the Romans believed that owning land in Rome provided the proper mentality necessary for army service; or in other words that one could only fight for a Rome when one had a share in its physical property. The connection made between land ownership and soldiering was therefore a psychological consideration, and the property requirements were designed to ensure that the level of motivation of soldiers in the army remained high. Just as Appius Claudius Crassus had framed it, it was patriotism and a sense of duty which were the correct motivational tools for the soldier.

Fifty years before Marius ostentatiously recruited the *capite censi* and, at the same time, declared himself more competent than the aristocracy by warrant of his practical military experience, the connection between the soldier and his ownership of land had come under scrutiny.⁵⁹ Supposedly provoked by his experience of traveling through the countryside and seeing the land farmed by slaves and not citizens, in 133 B.C. the tribune Tiberius Gracchus proposed a law intended to reaffirm the limit on the holding of public land because the limit of 500 *iugera* per citizen was being largely ignored. Tiberius proposed to form a commission to survey the countryside and enforce these limits, which had been encroached upon by the wealthier sections of society acquiring larger landholdings at the expense of the poor.

⁵⁹ Sall. *Iug.* 85.

Two arguments have been advanced in order to elucidate exactly which underlying problems the Gracchan legislation was intended to address. The first is that it was aimed at resolving a crisis of manpower in the army by giving more citizens land and thus allowing them to meet the property requirements.⁶⁰ The second is that the manpower crisis was already being solved by simply lowering the property qualifications for army service, and the Gracchan legislation was instead an attempt to bolster a population which the Romans believed to be in decline.⁶¹

The traditional view that the *leges Semproniae agrariae* were measures aimed towards solving a shortage of manpower in the army rests on the acceptance of the statement of Appian that the Gracchan legislation was aimed at securing a rise in population and hence more manpower for the military. This view has not gone uncontested. In an important article published in 1983, Rich argued from the premise that it was unlikely, in a Roman society which Rich categorizes as possessing a conservatism “generally tempered with pragmatism” that a crisis of manpower had arisen from a stubborn devotion to the principle that the soldier must be a property-owning citizen.⁶² He argues that even if the population had faced a small decline, the average number of legions deployed in the field after the Third Macedonian War was also much smaller than it had been previously, meaning that the Romans simply did not need as many men to fill the ranks of the army. He concludes that the aim of the Gracchan legislation was to counter a perceived decline in the free citizen and allied population.

⁶⁰ For example, Toynbee (1965); Hopkins (1978); Brunt (1971a); Cornell (1996).

⁶¹ De Ligt (2007); building on Gabba (1949); (1976); and his own earlier work of 2004 for the idea that the decline in population was a widely held, but erroneous belief in this time period.

⁶² Rich (1983), 288.

In a more recent article, de Ligt has argued that there was in fact no real demographic decline in the population during the 2nd century, but there was an increase in rural poverty which dropped many citizens out of the ranks of the *assidui*, those eligible for military service.⁶³ In his view, the decline in the census figures recorded in the 130s B.C. (from the *periochae* of Livy) related to this increase in poverty, because the censors took less care to register the rural poor than citizens eligible for military service. This decline in the census figures led many, like Tiberius Gracchus, to believe that there was, or shortly would be, a dearth of citizens eligible for the army.

I agree with the argument proposed by Gabba and recently championed by de Ligt that there were several occasions on which the property qualification for military service was lowered during the second century.⁶⁴ This does not, however, mean that if the manpower problem was being addressed in one manner, the Gracchi would not have proposed to address it in another. I argue that the Gracchan legislation introduced an alternative solution to the problem of declining manpower, one which sought to return to an old ideology rather than utilizing a “quick fix” solution. The Gracchi wished to preserve the old and conservative notion that the soldier should be a citizen farmer, and they sought to fix the perceived manpower problem in a way which would allow the Romans to return to the principle that this was the manner by which the citizen

⁶³ de Ligt (2007).

⁶⁴ A summary of the argument is given by de Ligt (2007), 124-7. Evidence from Livy and Polybius gives us a fairly certain reduction of property qualification for the fifth class before 150 B.C. There is also the possibility that there was a second reduction, depending on the evidence of the census records as well as scanty and confused references to the qualification of the fifth class in Gellius, Nonius, and Cicero. This evidence suggests that a second change in property qualification needs to be dated after 141 B.C. Gabba suggested that the censors only enumerated those citizens who qualified for military service. If the property qualification was adjusted between 131/0 and 125/4 B.C., then this would explain the large jump in numbers which occurs between these years, when the recorded population increases by some 75,000.

contributed to the state, and that only the citizen was in possession of the right mentality for soldiering.

The Gracchan legislation represents conservative ideas, ideas which were not radical but rather were executed in a radical fashion. The preservation of the traditional ideological connection between the soldier citizen and the land was a deeply conservative approach to the perceived problem. The practical, quick approach was an extension of the method which was already being utilized, the reduction of the property qualification for military service. The Marian reforms, in which Marius simply recruited the *capite censi*, represented the logical conclusion of pursuing this solution, at the same time dismissing the traditional connection between land and the soldier.

There are several reasons why the Gracchi and other conservative elements who supported them might have preferred to reinforce the existing model of army service rather than opting for the quick fix solution. The property requirement for army service by the latter half of the second century has been shown to be extremely small, indicating that the objections to the Marian reforms by the aristocracy were ideological.⁶⁵ Firstly, the ownership of land was a tangible and quantifiable way to measure a man's emotional investment in the state, as shown by Plutarch's comment that the Romans measured commitment in terms of wealth. When Crassus told the tribunes that he would not quibble by measuring exact amounts of pay and length of service, he pointed out that this was the way to deal with mercenaries, not citizens.

The idea that the best soldier is a landowner is something which occurs repeatedly in the descriptions of Tiberius' reasons for his proposed reforms. Appian writes:

⁶⁵ Rosenstein (2004), 185-8; 75 with 234 n.68.

When the time for voting came he advanced many other arguments at considerable length and also asked them whether it was not just to let the commons divide the common property; whether a citizen was not worthy of more consideration at all times than a slave; whether a man who served in the army was not more useful than one who did not; and whether one who had a share in the country was not more likely to be devoted to the public interests.⁶⁶

Tiberius' words reflect the ideology of soldiering as a privileged responsibility of the citizen which carries enormous significance to Roman society, and the notion that soldiering is bounded by a reciprocal relationship in which state and citizen both play their part by giving something to the other. He references several aspects of the reciprocal relationship between the citizen and the state: firstly, the citizen was more meaningful to the state than a slave by warrant of his status; that, of all citizens, the citizen who made his contribution as soldier should be regarded more highly still. In regard to the state's interests, a landowner was better disposed to the state than someone who owned nothing.

Plutarch is even more explicit in his version of Tiberius' argument, where he speaks of the soldiers who should be motivated by their connection to the state as landowners, but are not:

And it is with lying lips that their commanders exhort the soldiers in their battles to defend tombs and shrines from the enemy; for not a man of them has an hereditary altar, not one of all these many Romans an ancestral tomb, but they fight and die to support others in wealth and luxury, and though they are styled masters of the world, they have not a single clod of earth that is their own.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ *B. Civ.* 1.1.11: ἐνστάσης δὲ τῆς χειροτονίας πολλὰ μὲν ἄλλα προεῖπεν ἐπαγωγὰ καὶ μακρά, διηρώτα δ' ἐπ' ἐκείνοις, εἰ δίκαιον τὰ κοινὰ κοινῇ διανέμεσθαι καὶ εἰ γνησιώτερος αἰεὶ θεράπωντος ὁ πολίτης καὶ χρησιμώτερος ὁ στρατιώτης ἀπολέμου καὶ τοῖς δημοσίοις εὐνούστερος ὁ κοινωνός.

⁶⁷ *Plut. Ti. Gracc.* 9.5: οἱ δ' αὐτοκράτορες ψεύδονται τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐν ταῖς μάχαις παρακαλοῦντες ὑπὲρ τάφων καὶ ἱερῶν ἀμύνεσθαι τοὺς πολεμίους οὐδενὶ γὰρ ἔστιν οὐ βωμὸς πατρῶος, οὐκ ἡρίον προγονικόν

Tiberius was claiming that the Roman soldier was losing the reciprocal relationship with the state which allegedly motivated him to be a better soldier. The soldier, according to the ideology shown in the stories of Marcus Curtius and Cincinnatus, was supposed to have a private share in Rome's land and, at the same time, be an integral part of Rome's destiny and purpose. Here the soldier has one and not the other; as a soldier he is a master of the world, but on a personal level he lacks the share in Rome that would provide him the correct mentality to live up to that role.

When Marius reformed the army's intake to include the landless poor, the *capite censi*, the objections to his proposal came from the "leading men in Rome", or the conservative aristocracy. Plutarch describes two elements of Marius' story as closely associated: his own fight to establish his credentials against his detractors who looked upon him as a rustic *novus homo* and his recruitment of the *capite censi*. Just as Marius wished to explode the old conservative ideology that Rome's aristocratic patrician families were uniquely qualified to lead in both peace and war, he also attacked the notion that the landed classes made better soldiers:

But this was not the chief thing that people found offensive about Marius; even more irritating to the leading men in Rome were the speeches he delivered, shot through with arrogant and abusive disrespect. He used to cry out that he had carried off the consulship as booty snatched from the effete high-born and wealthy members of society, and that if he wanted to show off to the people of Rome, he

τῶν τοσούτων Ῥωμαίων, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ἀλλοτρίας τρυφῆς καὶ πλούτου πολεμοῦσι καὶ ἀποθνήσκουσι, κύριοι τῆς οἰκουμένης εἶναι λεγόμενοι, μίαν δὲ βῶλον ἰδίαν οὐκ ἔχοντες.

would display the wounds on his own body rather than the tombs of corpses and the portraits of other people.⁶⁸

The portraits of others refers to the *imagines* of ancestors which were paraded at the funerals of men of ancient patrician families. These were the type of men who rose easily to positions of power at Rome, including military commands, and thus exercised authority by warrant of family status rather than their military competence. Here and in Sallust's version of the same events, Marius declared himself superior to such men, in doing so deriding the very mentality which held that they were naturally qualified to command. In the same way, the mention of tombs recalls both the ancestral connection which the nobles exploited, but also the argument made by Tiberius that the ordinary soldiers did not have an "ancestral tomb." The old traditional ideology was that the greater the individual's ancestral connection to Rome, the greater his ability to fight for it, whether commander or foot-soldier. Marius contended that optimal fighters and generals were products of their military experience, and he closely allied his own situation as a *novus homo* to that of the *capite censi*. Marius, in essence, validated the worth of the poorer Roman and cemented a greater connection between that man and the state in the face of a more exclusive ideology. According to Sallust, after his mockery of the nobles and their model of commanding like a master over slaves, Marius provided an alternative

⁶⁸ Plut. *Mar.* 9.2: οὐ μὴν ταῦτά γε μάλιστα διέβαλλε τὸν Μάριον, ἀλλ' οἱ λόγοι θρασεῖς ὄντες ὑπεροψία καὶ ὕβρει τοὺς πρώτους ἐλύπουν, σκυλὸν τε βοῶντος αὐτοῦ τὴν ὑπατείαν φέρεσθαι τῆς τῶν εὐγενῶν καὶ πλουσίων μαλακίας, καὶ τραύμασιν οἰκείοις πρὸς τὸν δῆμον, οὐ μνήμασι νεκρῶν οὐδ' ἀλλοτρίαις εἰκόσι νεανιεύεσθαι.

model for the army, one which he felt would produce a fighting force that would be more successful than previous forces in Africa⁶⁹:

Therefore do you, who are of military age, join your efforts with mine and serve your country, and let no-one feel fear because of disasters to others or the arrogance of generals. I, Marius, shall be with you on the march and in battle, at once your counselor and companion of your dangers, and I shall treat myself and you alike in all respects.⁷⁰

It is evident that Marius envisioned a different kind of army, not just superior because of his leadership, but closing the gap between commander and troops. What he proposed to do moved the army away from being a reflection of Roman society with its divide of commons and aristocracy, and towards being an organization more focused on the military task at hand. In this sense, Marius remade the army in his own image twice over: firstly when he presented himself as the archetype of competence over blood and social standing, and then again when he recruited the *capite censi*. With both actions he was challenging an old belief that the Roman citizen's emotional connection to his country came from his ownership of land, and in the traditional view made him qualified for service.

When Marius changed the nature of military service from contribution to career, he fundamentally changed the character of the army. Previously it had been believed that only the citizen's physical property tied him to the state and motivated him to fight. The conservative element of Rome wanted to protect what they saw as the factor ensuring the quality of their troops. Soldiering was a duty, a contribution that the citizen made in

⁶⁹ Like a master over slaves- Sall. *Iug.* 85.35.

⁷⁰ Sall. *Iug.* 85.47-8: Quam ob rem vos, quibus militaris aetas est, annitimini mecum et capessite rem publicam, neque quemquam ex calamitate aliorum aut imperatorum superbia metus ceperit. Egomet in agmine [a]ut in proelio consultor idem et socius periculi vobiscum adero, meque vosque in omnibus rebus iuxta geram.

reciprocal relationship to the state. Marius made soldiering an end in itself. At the same time, he made the armed forces a self-selecting group; men who came forward to volunteer for the military motivated by personal reasons rather than the sense of duty which had characterized the soldiers of the middle and late Republic. Marius changed what it meant to be a soldier, and he destroyed the carefully constructed model of citizen contribution which Tiberius Gracchus had fought so hard to preserve.

VII. Conclusion

As the most important contribution that the individual citizen made to the state, military service was framed by a very particular set of beliefs about what the experience of soldiering meant, and what it should be like. Both practically and ideologically the soldier was far from disposable, partly because of the significance and even reverence attached to service as a soldier, and partly because being a soldier was virtually synonymous with the act of conquering others. What the soldier did for Rome was not just to provide his service, but during that service to live up to the idea of the soldier who was responsible for preserving Rome's strength and bringing about her destiny. What Rome did for the soldier was to treat him accordingly; taking care for his life and endeavoring to return him to his farm when his service was complete.

The idea of the soldier as the agent of Rome's destiny and the implication that the soldier is not just a fighter but a successful conqueror of others also finds its expression in Polybius. The story of Marcus Curtius was an etiology for Rome's success, linking her destiny with her military power and, more specifically, with her soldiers. Polybius'

Histories tells how that promise from the gods played out; how Rome fulfilled her destiny and seized hegemony of the known world. His evaluation of Rome's success also depends heavily on the soldier, but it gives the nuanced perspective of the investigative outsider to ideas and myths which gave emotional and patriotic force to the soldier's role, but little analysis.

I will return to the theme of the soldier's experience as bound up in a very particular set of ideas and requirements in Chapter Three, where I use Livy to explore Roman beliefs about the soldier's identity. I will demonstrate that the soldier's obligation to face danger and overcome it is only a starting point for a much fuller set of activities which allow the soldier to maintain his identity as a soldier. I will show that in Livy, the soldier's identity is fragile, defined not by membership in a legion or a uniform, but by continuing to perform the activities associated with soldiering. How the soldier truly fulfils his obligation to the state is an extension of the concepts revealed in the soldier's scar; he must put himself in danger, and continue to face that danger, until he becomes the conqueror that the soldier figure is envisioned to be.

Chapter Two

To Conquer or to Die: Polybius' Scientific Explanation of a Roman Slogan

I. Introduction

Perceptions about the character and destiny of a nation can find their expression in a multitude of different ways. Some methods are imprecise, such as the etiological tale of Marcus Curtius, which endows Rome with a special destiny and makes Curtius and soldiers like him figures of Rome's defining strength. When Polybius came to the same question, what had propelled Rome into her hegemony of the Mediterranean, he cast a critical and analytical eye upon the factors which had contributed to her success and set out to elucidate those factors in concrete and scientific terms. His explanation, laid out in book six of the histories, incorporates several different strands of thought, beginning with his theory of *anacyclosis* which looks to Rome's political system for her success. Polybius, however, finds this insufficient, and supplements his account of Rome's constitution with an account of her character, treating the army as a particularly strong example of Roman culture in action.

Polybius' explanation also made the soldier figure central to Rome's success, but his reasons were entirely different from the semi-mythic explanations of Rome's martial power. The account of the army and the Roman national character which he provides in book six is heavily indebted to social psychology. Polybius finds the answer to Rome's success in how the Romans think, and he nuances in psychological terms expressions of culture which we find in other sources painted with broad strokes. What we find

elsewhere portrayed as a dictum or slogan, “victory or death,” Polybius himself explains with reference to a Roman culture that encourages and nurtures a heroic ideology founded in willing self-sacrifice. The military figure Horatius Cocles stands as an example of the kind of Roman mentality which contributed to her ascendancy.

II. The slogan of “victory or death”

Polybius was aware that an ideology of victory or death was part of Mid-Republican discourse. Describing the battle of Zama, Polybius relates the exhortation of the Roman general Scipio Africanus to his soldiers. Scipio’s final instruction to his troops contains both an order and an explanation:

Go, therefore, to meet the foe with two objects before you, victory or death. For men animated by such a spirit must always overcome their adversaries, since they go into battle ready to throw their lives away.¹

Scipio tells his soldiers that the mentality with which they approach battle will dictate its outcome. It is only through making peace in his mind with the prospect of death that the soldier bolsters his chances of living. The dictum, we are told, originates from one particular and ostentatious action of the senate in the immediate aftermath of the disastrous Roman defeat at the battle of Cannae in 216 B.C.² Hannibal had taken some 8,000 prisoners, mainly men who had been captured after they had been left behind in

¹ Polyb. 15.10.6-7: διόπερ ἡξίου δύο προθεμένους, ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν ἢ νικᾶν ἢ θνήσκειν, ὁμόσε χωρεῖν εἰς τοὺς πολεμίους. τοὺς γὰρ τοιαύτας ἔχοντας διαλήψεις κατ' ἀνάγκην αἰεὶ κρατεῖν τῶν ἀντιταττομένων, ἐπειδὴν ἀπελπίσαντες τοῦ ζῆν ἴωσιν εἰς τὴν μάχην.

² Cf. De Sanctis (1968), 50 n.81 and 216 n.33, who treats this incident as the first of a new and harsher policy on the part of the Romans.

camp. Hannibal dispatched envoys from that number to request their ransom from the senate. Polybius writes that the Romans' objective was twofold; to thwart Hannibal and at the same time to effect a change in mentality among their own troops:

Seeing that Hannibal's object in acting thus was both to obtain funds and to deprive the troops opposed to him of their high spirit, by showing that, even if defeated, they might hope for safety. . . . [They] defeated Hannibal's calculation and the hopes he had based on them by refusing to ransom the men, and at the same time imposed by law on their own troops the duty of either conquering or dying in the field, as there was no hope of safety for them if defeated.³

I argued in chapter one that the Romans considered survival and conquest to be more significant than dying gloriously, an argument which draws its most significant evidence from Livy. In this passage Polybius, writing much earlier, explains the origins of the harsh declaration that victory and death were the only options available to the soldier, and how it was intended to promote the pursuit of victory. The extreme measure arising from Rome's crisis was destined to become a normative value. Usually, the individual entering combat could expect any of a number of results from his efforts, including capture, defeat and retreat, desertion, or being wounded and retired from the battle. Polybius says that refusing to ransom the soldiers from Cannae could change the mental outlook of the soldiers then under arms by invalidating all likely outcomes save victory and death. In battle, if the soldier even entertained the thought that he would be safe in

³ Polyb. 6.58. 10-12: συνιδόντες τὴν Ἀννίβου πρόθεσιν, ὅτι βούλεται διὰ τῆς πράξεως ταύτης ἅμα μὲν εὐπορῆσαι χρημάτων, ἅμα δὲ τὸ φιλότιμον ἐν ταῖς μάχαις ἐξελέσθαι τῶν ἀντιταττομένων, ὑποδείξας ὅτι τοῖς ἡττημένοις ὅμως ἐλπίς ἀπολείπεται σωτηρίας... τοὺς μὲν Ἀννίβου λογισμοὺς καὶ τὰς ἐν τούτοις ἐλπίδας ἀπέδειξαν κενάς, ἀπειπάμενοι τὴν διαλύτρωσιν τῶν ἀνδρῶν, τοῖς δὲ παρ' αὐτῶν ἐνομοθέτησαν ἢ νικᾶν μαχομένους ἢ θνήσκειν, ὥς ἄλλης οὐδεμιᾶς ἐλπίδος ὑπαρχούσης εἰς σωτηρίαν αὐτοῖς ἡττωμένοις. On the effects of policies of deliberately dwindling soldier's viable options in a combat situation, see Chapter Six.

the event of a defeat, it would be detrimental to his performance. As was the case for Scipio, there is a demonstrable awareness of the contribution that the soldier's psychological state makes to his combat efficiency. Victory or death was meant to breed conquerors.

Livy gives us some insight into proper behavior for the Roman soldier when he discusses a certain incident from Cannae, when a soldier's body was discovered under the corpse of a Numidian when Hannibal's soldiers picked through the battlefield. This soldier drew the attention of the Carthaginians because the condition and placement of the bodies told the story of how the soldier had died. Livy describes what had happened: "the Roman with hands too powerless to grasp his weapon had, in his mad rage, torn his enemy with his teeth, and while doing so expired."⁴ The significance of this soldier is not that he had died for his country, but that he had died trying to achieve victory for his country by any and every means left available to him. The ideal soldier represents continuation, unflagging endeavor, and the choice of pushing through to victory or expiring in the act.⁵ This is not so much a philosophy of "conquer or die" as much as "conquer or die trying."

Kapust includes the mandate of victory or death in his discussion of intimidation and fear as tools of persuasion in the ancient world. In reference to the senate's dismissal of the envoys from the Roman prisoners of war, he comments that in Rome, "cowardice was stigmatized, while courage was to be praised and cultivated."⁶ For Polybius, this

⁴ Livy 22.51: [Romanus] cum manibus ad capiendum telum inutilibus, in rabiem ira uersa laniando dentibus hostem exspirasset.

⁵ This image had become a cliché by the first century B.C., see Rosenstein (1990), 95-8.

⁶ Kapust (2008), 356.

social phenomenon was a symptom of Roman national character. Eckstein has argued that the declaration is intended as a statement of Roman senatorial policy more than an order to the soldiers. He writes that for Polybius, this decision was directed toward the whole of Roman character and envisioned a Rome that would not negotiate, a Rome which Polybius, on the basis of this decision, credits with “nobility of spirit” [μεγαλοψυχία]; that is, it was a moment in which the Romans made a defiant declaration about their own character to Hannibal.⁷

This declaration was no hollow ‘sound bite’ but carried a practical force beyond even the abandonment of the prisoners of war. The right of *postliminium*, by which captured Roman soldiers could return to their citizen status when peace was declared, seemed not to apply to those soldiers who had surrendered or deserted.⁸ This is important because it implies that the philosophy of victory or death refers to the consequences and aftermath of a battle and does not indicate a tendency for commanders or soldiers to act recklessly on the battlefield.⁹ This is supported by what we know of the conduct of armies in this period. Roman generals were no more reckless with the lives of their troops than before, and their casualty figures are broadly comparable with what we know of ancient warfare. Rosenstein has recently calculated that for the period of 200-168 B.C., according to the casualty figures given by our sources and the estimation of the number of troops involved in each battle, the Romans on average suffered a loss of about 4-5 percent of their forces in a victory, and about three times that number in defeats. This statistic is comparable with calculations of Greek hoplite casualties and seems to

⁷ Eckstein (1995), 65-7.

⁸ On *postliminium* in this context see Leigh (2004), 57-77.

⁹ See further Chapter Six below.

represent a typical pattern of loss in an ancient battle, indicating that the Romans were not engaged in acts of desperation in order to accord with the victory or death ideology.¹⁰ In the field, soldiers guilty of cowardly behavior were not subject to capital punishment, but were frequently punished in some alternative manner.¹¹

As in the story of Curtius, the idea of victory or death sends a positive but vague message. Cicero repeats Polybius' identification of the declaration as a display of a lofty spirit [*excelso animo*] and moral rectitude [*honestas*], and agreed that it was a defining moment in which the senate and people made a statement about their character:

Though these might have been ransomed by a small sum of money, the senate voted not to redeem them, in order that our soldiers might have the lesson planted in their hearts that they must either conquer or die. When Hannibal heard this news, according to that same writer [Polybius], he lost heart completely, because the senate and the people of Rome displayed spirit so lofty in a time of disaster. Thus apparent expediency is outweighed when placed in the balance against moral rectitude.¹²

For Cicero, declaring the soldier's options to be victory or death offers a moral choice, a symptom of a Rome where *honestas* is weighed above advantage or gain. Cicero, however, accepts the declaration as evidence of the Roman people's character but leaves it largely unexamined: statements as bold as victory or death are designed to encapsulate

¹⁰ On the Greek casualty figures and their comparability, see Rosenstein (2004), 109-16.

¹¹ See for example, Marcellus who elected to demote soldiers who had lost their standards, (Livy 27.13); and Sulla who singled out and stigmatized soldiers who had allowed their line to be broken, (Frontin. Str. 4.1.27); Rosenstein (1990), 109 n.75.

¹² Cicero, *Off.* 3.32.114: Eos senatus non censuit redimendos, cum id parva pecunia fieri posset, ut esset insitum militibus nostris aut vincere aut emori. Qua quidem re audita fractum animum Hannibalis scribit idem, quod senatus populusque Romanus rebus afflictis tam excelso animo fuisset. Sic honestatis comparatione ea, quae videntur utilia, vincuntur.

complex sets of ideas about value and culture. For this reason it is useful to understand the phrase as a “slogan”, the definition of which is as follows:

A phrase, a short sentence, a headline, a dictum, which, intentionally or unintentionally, amounts to an appeal to the person who is exposed to it to buy some article, to revive or to strengthen an already well-established stereotype, to accept a new idea, or to undertake some action.¹³

Slogans are tools which simplify communication. According to Sharkansky’s recent definition, they reinforce or disseminate ideas, aims or the nature of an organization or individual in a manner which is more easily understood than more complex competing ideas about a subject.¹⁴ In a Rome which often celebrated the unarticulated, considering it more fitting to Roman manners than something explained eloquently, slogans had a natural appeal.¹⁵ As a declaration that defined the Romans to themselves and in opposition to their enemy Hannibal, the simple, defiant slogan probably created an encouraging and reassuring effect. If the slogan struck a chord with the Romans, however, for Polybius it was not enough to explain Roman success. Men willing to die for their country were not a naturally occurring commodity in Rome, but rather a product of a Roman cultural system. Polybius in book six set out to investigate what kind of circumstances, institutions and actions would foster a culture of men who wholeheartedly believed in this slogan.

¹³ Sherif (1937), 450.

¹⁴ Sharkansky (2002), 75.

¹⁵ See for example, Livy’s disdain of the Greeks because they have an affinity for words and are a race “stronger in word than deed” [*lingua magis strenua quam factis*] (8.22.8); the Athenians, in fact, have no other skills upon which to rely, and Livy says that they fought against Philip “using words, which are their sole strength” [*litteris verbisque, quibus solis valent*] (31.44.9).

III. Polybius and his design

Semi-mythological stories such as that of Marcus Curtius and declarations like the senate's victory or death mandate were self-descriptors of Rome and the Romans, which declared loudly Rome's present character and future aspirations. The destiny of eternal Rome had been bought by the sacrifice of Marcus Curtius and rested on the strength of her soldiers, who were conquerors because their acceptance of the policy of victory or death empowered them to be so. These kinds of ideas, both patriotic and emotionally charged, made Rome's rise to hegemony of the Mediterranean not only entirely explicable but even pre-destined.

Polybius put the Romans and their attitudes under the microscope. He viewed Rome and the Romans from an outsider's perspective and sought answers to the question of Rome's phenomenal success in terms which were coherent to his intended Greek audience.¹⁶ Polybius raised deeper and more fundamental questions about the Roman spirit than the simple observation that these values and beliefs existed by giving a nuanced explanation of how they were preserved, perpetuated, and found their expression in individuals. His account of the Roman constitution and the military in book six begins by looking for answers to the question of success in Greek models of political philosophy, but he eventually finds a satisfactory answer only by turning to social psychology.

¹⁶ Cf. Walbank (2002), 291: Polybius "set out to understand and elucidate, primarily for his own countrymen, the phenomenon of a new world power."

At the beginning of the *Histories*, Polybius declared his intention to make explanation a central part of his narrative. This meant that he approached his work as a didactic exercise which presented Roman history to the reader from two angles:

For who is so worthless or indolent as not to wish to know by what means and under what system of polity the Romans in less than fifty-three years have succeeded in subjecting nearly the whole inhabited world to their sole government — a thing unique in history? Or who again is there so passionately devoted to other spectacles or studies as to regard anything as of greater moment than the acquisition of this knowledge?¹⁷

Polybius separates the explanation of the historical process into two complementary pieces: “by what means” indicates the events that comprised the trajectory of Rome’s ascendancy, and “under what system of polity” refers to the internal political structure of the Romans.¹⁸ Polybius’ historical assessment of Rome’s character thus operates like a biographical model, in which the events of a person’s life are driven and informed by their personality; in the same way, the fifty-three year period of Rome’s rise to hegemony could not be fully understood without attention to events and character together.¹⁹

¹⁷ Polyb. 1. 1.5-6, τίς γὰρ οὕτως ὑπάρχει φαῦλος ἢ ῥάθυμος ἀνθρώπων ὃς οὐκ ἂν βούλοιο γινῶναι πῶς καὶ τίνι γένει πολιτείας ἐπικρατηθέντα σχεδὸν ἅπαντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην οὐχ ὅλοις πεντήκοντα καὶ τρισὶν ἔτεσιν ὑπὸ μίαν ἀρχὴν ἔπεσε τὴν Ῥωμαίων, ὃ πρότερον οὐχ εὐρίσκεται γεγονός, [6] τίς δὲ πάλιν οὕτως ἐκπαθὴς πρὸς τι τῶν ἄλλων θαμάτων ἢ μαθημάτων ὃς προυργιαίτερον ἂν τι ποιήσαιτο τῆσδε τῆς ἐμπειρίας;

¹⁸ On the relationship of book six to the rest of Polybius’ work see Walbank (1972), 130-56 and especially 133-4.

¹⁹ In Polybius’ view the affairs of the Mediterranean world are inseparable after the 140th Olympiad, and have become what he calls “an organic whole” (οἶονει σωματοειδη, Polyb. 1.3.4). In this respect, the practice of history draws closer to biography in that history written as universal privileges the differentiation of time rather than geographical space; see Clarke (1999), 77 – 128. The practice of fixing a geographical boundary and treating events which happen within it as a kind of βίος is attested in the fragments of the historian Dicaearchus of Messana, who wrote an account of Greece from its origins entitled the βίος τῆς Ἑλλάδος; *FHG* 2. 225–53; *RE* Suppl. 11. 526–34. The work of Dicaearchus was

Polybius undertakes the question of the Romans' "system of polity" in book six, which marks a pause in the historical narrative. He emphasizes that the information contained in book six is integral to the aims and objectives of the histories; in fact he calls the book "one of the essential parts of my whole design."²⁰ Walbank labeled book six an "extraordinary and complicated piece of writing" because it represents the marriage of theorizing based on the doctrines of Greek political writers and Polybius' own observations from his sixteen years of detention in Rome.²¹ The result of Polybius' juxtaposition of these two approaches is that book six distinguishes them; the one containing those parts which deal with *anacyclosis*, the mixed constitution, and the nature of different constitutions; and those which deal with the cultural practices and beliefs of the Romans: the material on the army, Roman funerals, and the example of Horatius Cocles.²²

Greek political ideas only went so far in explaining Rome's success. Polybius begins book six by detailing the cycle called *anacyclosis*, the political theory which states that the three good forms of government: monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, are all linked in a cycle, in which each system degenerates into its undesirable form of, respectively, kingship, oligarchy, and mob rule. This tendency to understand political systems in the model of birth, flowering, degeneration, death and renewal is a distinctly Greek feature and owes much to Polybius' Greek predecessors.²³ Polybius then states

almost certainly known to Polybius, and he may have drawn from it when he wrote his discussion of the comparison of constitutions; Aalders (1968).

²⁰ Polyb. 6.2.2: ἔν τι τῶν ἀναγκαίων καὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τῆς ὅλης.

²¹ Walbank (2002), 278.

²² *Anacyclosis* and the mixed constitution: Polybius 6.1 -18; The Roman army: 6.19-42; The comparison of constitutions: 6.43-56; The Roman funeral example and Horatius Cocles: 6.53-5.

²³ On Polybius' Greek predecessors see Walbank (1972), 135-9, and more recently Halm (2009).

that, like Sparta, Rome had developed a mixed constitution possessing all the best elements of the three good models. This had allowed her to escape the cycle and enjoy a stronger form of government. *Anacyclosis* and the mixed constitution, however, did not provide sufficient explanation for the extraordinary success of the Romans because their scope was so clearly limited. As Ando writes, “The ‘mixed constitution’ might have preserved Rome’s internal stability, but it certainly cannot explain the growth of empire.”²⁴

Explaining that central question—the growth of empire—required Polybius to supplement his political theorizing with observations about Rome’s own unique national character. This question, naturally, is about people; how the Romans act and interact with one another, the beliefs and values that they hold, and how they express them. These questions fundamentally belong to the disciplines of sociology and psychology, and much of what Polybius tells us in book six can be understood in reference to this discipline.

IV. The soldier’s contribution to Roman national character

It is generally thought that Polybius wrote a transitional paragraph, now lost, between the account of the Roman constitution at its prime at 6.18 and the beginning of the account of the military at 6.19.²⁵ We do not know if he gave any advice to his reader regarding how his description of the military should be weighted, but we can observe how the military

²⁴ Ando (1999), 13.

²⁵ Walbank, *Commentary* I, 636; 664; 697.

sections contribute to his account of the Roman national character. Not only is it of obvious practical relevance to Rome's mainly military rise to hegemony, but the account of the army is a vital part of Polybius' intent in book six to encapsulate all the elements of Roman life making a contribution to her character as a nation.²⁶ Eckstein points out that Polybius' test of a polity serves to anthropomorphize it; it must act with "dignity and nobility" in misfortune and success, and the whole essence of book six is that it is, "a test of character."²⁷ The account of the army also has a big role to play in Polybius' explanation of Rome's success. Walbank comments that the account of the army is "included as clearly relevant to the extension of Roman power, and of special interest to Polybius personally."²⁸

Polybius could boast a close association with the army, and his assessment of it can be regarded as well-informed. He displayed a great deal of interest in the workings of the military, declaring it impossible for a man to write of military matters without experience of warlike operations.²⁹ Polybius himself tells us that he wrote a book on tactics and had first hand experience of campaigns.³⁰ Famously, he was present at the sack of Carthage, where he describes talking to Scipio Aemilianus as the two watched the

²⁶ Cf. Eckstein (1995), 64-70; Walbank (1972), 147-9.

²⁷ Eckstein (1995), 66.

²⁸ Walbank, *Commentary* I, 636.

²⁹ On Polybius as a military writer, see Marsden (1974); Brunt (1971b), 625-34; on the experience necessary to write about military matters, Polyb.12.25g. The ability to effectively understand military matters was of crucial importance to Polybius, and he criticizes Ephorus for being a competent descriptor of naval battles but deficient in his knowledge of battle on land (12.25f). He devotes five chapters to critiquing the deficiencies in Callisthenes' account of the battle of Issus (12.17-22), and in drawing distinctions between himself and the historian Timaeus, he lists one of Timaeus' major flaws as the fact that he had no military experience (12.25h).

³⁰ Polyb. 9.20.4; the work is mentioned in Arrian Tact.1.1 and Aelian Tact. 1, 3-4, 19.10 (in Köchly and Rüstow [1853-5]).

destruction; he recalls also witnessing the plunder after the capture of Corinth.³¹ He describes the nature of the military as he witnessed it himself, possibly also drawing upon other sources.³² Polybius' intent throughout the description of the army is to highlight the collective, not the individual, and so his concentration is on the practices and institutions of the military. He rarely makes attributions of thoughts or emotions to his soldiers of the type that are commonplace in Livy and Caesar's work.³³ He is reluctant to take his narrative down to the level of engagement with the ordinary soldier, and when the soldiers appear as small groups, it is usually because they are performing some shameful activity, such as the soldiers at Corinth playing dice on works of art they have pulled from the walls, or at Astapa, rushing into a pyre of burning metal in order to seize loot.³⁴ In his treatise on tactics, Polybius describes generalship as the art of imposing order upon a "disorganized mob."³⁵

Polybius underscores the importance of the soldier figure when he makes the involvement of the soldier in the customs and laws of a state vital to its constitutional effectiveness. The character of a state for Polybius was the product of a mutual dialogue between its constitution, its customs and laws, and its citizens. In his account of the

³¹ Destruction of Carthage; Polyb. 38.21.1. The capture of Corinth: Polyb. 39.2.1-3. He did not necessarily witness the original destruction, see Walbank, *Commentary* III, 728.

³² Brunt (1971b), 625-34.

³³ See Chapters Three and Five below. In Caesar's account of the mutiny of Vesontio during the Gallic campaigns, a full chapter is devoted to describing the soldiers' feelings, behavior, professed complaints, and the spread of mutinous ideas. Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.39; 1-2, their fear; 3, the fear spreads through the ranks; 4, they try to leave; 5 the soldiers hide lamenting and crying; 8-9 declarations of tactical disagreement and declaration of defiance.

³⁴ Corinth: Polyb. 39.2.1-3; Astapa: Polyb. 11.24.11. The Roman soldiers in Polybius share the characteristic of greed with their Hellenic counterparts, see Eckstein (1995), 164-74.

³⁵ πλθος ἀτακτον, as quoted by Aelian 3.4. See Eckstein (1995), 162.

Cretan constitution, he explains how customs and laws dictate the nature of constitutions in general:

In my opinion there are two fundamental things in every state, by virtue of which its principle and constitution is either desirable or the reverse. I mean customs and laws [ἔθη καὶ νόμοι]. What is desirable in these makes men's private lives righteous and well ordered and the general character of the state gentle and just, while what is to be avoided has the opposite effect. So just as when we observe the laws and customs of a people to be good, we have no hesitation in pronouncing that the citizens and the state will consequently be good also, thus when we notice that men are covetous in their private lives and that their public actions are unjust, we are plainly justified in saying that their laws, their particular customs, and the state as a whole are bad.³⁶

For Polybius, there are universal rules which apply to all states and provide a means by which that state can be assessed; the state can be considered in terms of constitution, customs and laws, and citizens, and these parts inform and influence one another.³⁷ The Roman mixed constitution thus only forms one part of the explanation for Rome's success, and this picture can be supplemented by reference to its people and culture. For

³⁶ Polyb.6.47.1-5: ἐγὼ γὰρ οἶμαι δύ' ἀρχὰς εἶναι πάσης πολιτείας, δι' ὧν αἰρετὰς ἢ φευκτὰς συμβαίνει γίνεσθαι τὰς τε δυνάμεις αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς συστάσεις· αὐταὶ δ' εἰσὶν ἔθη καὶ νόμοι ὧν τὰ μὲν αἰρετὰ τοὺς τε κατ' ἰδίαν βίους τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὁσίους ἀποτελεῖ καὶ σώφρονας τό τε κοινὸν ἦθος τῆς πόλεως ἡμέρον ἀπεργάζεται καὶ δίκαιον, τὰ δὲ φευκτὰ τὸναντίον. ὥσπερ οὖν, ὅταν τοὺς ἐθισμοὺς καὶ νόμους κατὶδῶμεν παρά τισι σπουδαίους ὑπάρχοντας, θαρροῦντες ἀποφαινόμεθα καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐκ τούτων ἔσεσθαι καὶ τὴν τούτων πολιτείαν σπουδαίαν, οὕτως, ὅταν τοὺς τε κατ' ἰδίαν βίους τινῶν πλεονεκτικούς τὰς τε κοινὰς πράξεις ἀδίκους θεωρήσωμεν, δῆλον ὡς εἰκὸς λέγειν καὶ τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰ κατὰ μέρος ἔθη καὶ τὴν ὅλην πολιτείαν αὐτῶν εἶναι φαύλην.

³⁷ Customs and laws or ἔθη καὶ νόμοι : Walbank in his commentary rejects suggestions of Stoic influence upon either the phrase or the sentiment, pointing out that it is an expression frequently used by Polybius in a variety of contexts. The Aetolians desecrate a temple, showing no concern for the common ἔθη καὶ νόμοι of mankind, (4.67.4) The ἔθη καὶ νόμοι of the Romans in particular are mentioned in three instances; 6.56.1 ("law and custom" relating to the acquisition of wealth), 18.34.8 (the Greeks expect that Flaminius can be bribed, but this is contrary to Roman "law and custom") and 18.35.1 (Referring to the same incident, Polybius asserts that in former times all Romans followed this "law and custom", now only most of them.) In one other instance, ἔθη καὶ νόμοι refers to the career of Scipio as extraordinary to normal Roman "law and custom" which appears to mean the practice of prosecution in the law courts in order to gain prominence. Walbank, *Commentary I*, 733.

Polybius, a fundamental part of a strong constitution is that its soldiers in particular should be participating in the system which he outlined. A constitution is strong if its reach includes soldiers, and weak if it does not. One of the chief strengths of the Roman state is that the soldiers are an integral part of the political system. The integration of the soldier makes the state as a whole superior to Carthage:

The reason of this is that the troops they employ are foreign and mercenary, whereas those of the Romans are natives of the soil and citizens. So that in this respect also we must pronounce the political system of Rome to be superior to that of Carthage, the Carthaginians continuing to depend for the maintenance of their freedom on the courage of a mercenary force but the Romans on their own valour and on the aid of their allies.³⁸

By highlighting the system of Carthage—in which the soldiers are outside the constitution and unaffected by its values—Polybius shows us what a significant contribution the figure of the soldier makes to the Roman constitution, state, and character of Rome as a whole. That the soldier be part of the system is vital to its effectiveness. Polybius makes the integration of the soldier the decisive factor in the fortunes of the whole state:

Consequently even if they happen to be worsted at the outset, the Romans redeem defeat by final success, while it is the contrary with the Carthaginians. For the Romans, fighting as they are for their country and their children, never can abate their fury but continue to throw their whole hearts into the struggle until they get the better of their enemies.³⁹

³⁸ Polyb. 6.52.4-5: αἴτιον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ὅτι ξενικαῖς καὶ μισθοφόροις χρῶνται δυνάμεσι, Ῥωμαῖοι δ' ἐγχωρίοις καὶ πολιτικαῖς. ἢ καὶ περὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ταύτην τὴν πολιτείαν ἀποδεκτέον ἐκείνης μᾶλλον: ἢ μὲν γὰρ ἐν ταῖς τῶν μισθοφόρων εὐψυχίαις ἔχει τὰς ἐλπίδας αἰεὶ τῆς ἐλευθερίας, ἢ δὲ Ῥωμαίων ἐν ταῖς σφετέραις ἀρεταῖς καὶ ταῖς τῶν συμμάχων ἐπαρκεῖαις.

³⁹ Polyb. 6.52.6-7: διὸ κἄν ποτε πταίσωσι κατὰ τὰς ἀρχάς, Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν ἀναμάχονται τοῖς ὅλοις, Καρχηδόνιοι δὲ τοῦναντίον. ἐκείνοι γὰρ ὑπὲρ πατρίδος ἀγωνιζόμενοι καὶ τέκνων οὐδέποτε δύνανται λήξαι τῆς ὁργῆς, ἀλλὰ μένουσι ψυχομαχοῦντες, ἕως ἄν περιγένηνται τῶν ἐχθρῶν.

In order for a state to survive and be effective, the soldiers must be operating within the boundaries of its constitution and implicated in its fortunes.⁴⁰ In this way, the desirable attitude of willingness to sacrifice oneself for the state that is created by their social practices will affect the soldiers. As I will argue below, Horatius Cocles provides a military example of an embodied product of what almost looks like social engineering. Social psychology informs the account of how heroic soldiers are produced and most of book six.

Ideas of social psychology pervade all parts of book six, which evinces Polybius' pervasive interest in how the Romans think. Halm has demonstrated that the theory of *anacyclosis* presupposes a multitude of principles of human behavior and psychology, including an instinctive drive to individual self-aggrandizement, as is seen in the seizing of power by a tyrant, and a drive to cooperation in the pursuit of collective advantage, as in the original gathering together of humans under one leader. While these are instinctive motivations, *anacyclosis* also allows for reason as a determinant of social behaviors, such as monarchy's evolution to kingship under the judgment and reasoning of a thinking ruler. It is the inclusion of psychological principle which makes book six so didactic in nature, for once they have gained an understanding of the underlying social psychology which drives *anacyclosis*, the statesmen for whom the lesson is intended will be able to

⁴⁰ It should be noted that Polybius –like all our authors– does not address the question of the large percentage of the Roman army which was comprised of Italian allies, nor does he address the tactical question of Rome's numerical superiority. That such matters did not weigh heavily upon Polybius' interpretation of the soldier (or that of Livy and Sallust) is in itself worthy of further investigation. Here, I will be concentrating on how Polybius represents what he appears to understand as a Roman soldier from the city of Rome or its environs.

anticipate some political changes and gain, at least, a greater understanding of those which are not entirely predictable.⁴¹

In the same way, when Polybius describes the Romans and how they foster and maintain certain beliefs and attitudes in their society, he is considering psychological effects and patterns. Polybius' interest is in how the Romans produce one kind of mentality in particular, the ability to willingly make sacrifices for the state. Describing the natural superiority of the Italians over the Phoenicians, Polybius writes that their society is geared towards increasing that trait:

By their institutions also they do much to foster a spirit of bravery in the young men. A single instance will suffice to indicate the pains taken by the state to turn out men who will be ready to endure everything in order to gain a reputation in their country for valour.⁴²

Polybius implies deliberate social engineering on the part of the state, in which certain practices are intended to produce specific traits in individuals. He goes on to explain that the Romans achieve this by the ostentatious reinforcement of certain sets of actions and values as positive. His “single instance” refers to the Roman practice of holding public funerals for eminent individuals. During these funerals, the actions which made these individuals meaningful or significant to Roman society are presented in a speech while the man's body is on display. After this, Polybius records, comes the appearance of men wearing masks, the *imagines*, which represented the man's ancestors, and the deeds of those men are also recited verbally. According to Polybius, the effect of

⁴¹ Halm (1995), and (2009), 191-2.

⁴² Polyb. 6.52.10-11: μεγάλην δὲ καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐθισμῶν πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ποιοῦνται τῶν νέων παρόρησιν. ἔν δὲ ῥηθὲν ἱκανὸν ἔσται σημεῖον τῆς τοῦ πολιτεύματος σπουδῆς, ἣν ποιεῖται περὶ τὸ τοιούτους ἀποτελεῖν ἄνδρας ὥστε πᾶν ὑπομένειν χάριν τοῦ τυχεῖν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι τῆς ἐπ' ἀρετῇ φήμης.

this ritual is that the memory of these deeds is disseminated among a wider section of the population, providing both a model for emulation and eliciting the contribution of an audience expected to perpetuate these values:

By this means, by this constant renewal of the good report of brave men, the celebrity of those who performed noble deeds is rendered immortal, while at the same time the fame of those who did good service to their country becomes known to the people and a heritage for future generations.⁴³

The collective memory is thus primed to be handed down to a generation not yet in existence. The more pertinent impact of this ritual, however, is not that it creates knowledge or understanding passively, but that the dissemination of knowledge has the active result of instigating more activity which mimics or emulates the first set:

But the most important result is that young men are thus inspired to endure every suffering for public welfare in the hope of winning the glory that attends on brave men. What I say is confirmed by the facts. For many Romans have voluntarily [ἐκουσίως] engaged in single combat in order to decide a battle, not a few have faced certain death, some in war to save the lives of the rest, and others in peace to save the republic. Some even when in office have put their own sons to death contrary to every law or custom, setting a higher value on the interest of their country than on the ties of nature that bound them to their nearest and dearest.⁴⁴

⁴³ Polyb. 6.54.2: ἐξ ὧν καινοποιουμένης αἰεὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς ἐπ' ἀρετῇ φήμης ἀθανατίζεται μὲν ἡ τῶν καλόν τι διαπραξαμένων εὐκλεία, γνώριμος δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ παραδόσιμος τοῖς ἐπιγινομένοις ἡ τῶν εὐεργετησάντων τὴν πατρίδα γίνεται δόξα.

⁴⁴ Polyb. 6.54.2-5: τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, οἱ νέοι παρορμῶνται πρὸς τὸ πᾶν ὑπομένειν ὑπὲρ τῶν κοινῶν πραγμάτων χάριν τοῦ τυχεῖν τῆς συνακολουθοῦσης τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τῶν ἀνδρῶν εὐκλείας. πίστιν δ' ἔχει τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκ τούτων. πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐμονομάχησαν ἐκουσίως Ῥωμαίων ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν ὅλων κρίσεως, οὐκ ὀλίγοι δὲ προδῆλους εἶλοντο θανάτους, τινὲς μὲν ἐν πολέμῳ τῆς τῶν ἄλλων ἔνεκεν σωτηρίας, τινὲς δ' ἐν εἰρήνῃ χάριν τῆς τῶν κοινῶν πραγμάτων ἀσφαλείας. καὶ μὴν ἀρχὰς ἔχοντες ἔνιοι τοὺς ἰδίους υἱοὺς παρὰ πᾶν ἔθος ἢ νόμον ἀπέκτειναν, περὶ πλείονος ποιούμενοι τὸ τῆς πατρίδος συμφέρον τῆς κατὰ φύσιν οἰκειότητος πρὸς τοὺς ἀναγκαιοτάτους.

This is exactly what Polybius told us was the deliberate intent of the state: to create “brave men” [τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς]. Polybius’ explanation of the phenomenon contains key phrasing which expresses cognitive functioning. The young men are “inspired” [παρορμῶνται- urged, or incited]; they “set a higher value” [περὶ πλείονος ποιούμενοι- “make more of”] on their country than on their kin. The funeral ritual thus contributes to a culture where the Roman individual will perform an extreme action from his own free will, one which is detrimental to himself or his family, or in other words, intended to serve the public or collective interest above that of the individual. It indoctrinates a value system in which self-destruction is a positive thing if its aim is to help the collective. Polybius is describing a kind of social engineering, the products of which are men whose primary attribute is not acting in a certain way, but thinking in a certain way: men who believe dictums like victory or death and are happy to put themselves forward on behalf of the state.

The Roman military system of rewards stands as the army’s particular version of the constitution which creates volunteer heroes, a microcosm of what happens in the rest of society. Just as in the example of the *imagines*, deeds are acknowledged and made visible in a public fashion. The general calls an assembly and calls each distinguished soldier forward, then gives an account of the deeds for which he is being rewarded.⁴⁵ We discover that the prizes are given to particular soldiers only:

These gifts are not made to men who have wounded or stripped an enemy in a regular battle or at the storming of a city, but to those who during skirmishes or in similar circumstances, where there is no

⁴⁵ Polyb. 6.39.2.

necessity for engaging in single combat, have voluntarily [ἐκουσίως] and deliberately [προαίρεσιν] thrown themselves into the danger.⁴⁶

The two words that Polybius uses are the same as he uses to describe the Romans who voluntarily (ἐκουσίως) engage in single combat and to characterize Cocles himself who deliberately (προαίρεσιν) sacrifices his life.⁴⁷ A higher value is placed on the soldier who steps up without compulsion, and the same criterion operates in the army as operated in the general scheme of Roman life. The military environment and the funerals of great men both encourage men to voluntarily step forward for the state. The institutions of the Romans glorify deeds done for the Roman state, and they create an environment in which these deeds are highly valued. This schema is why mercenaries simply do not measure up to native soldiers, for the exposure to these displays of honor which create such spectacularly brave mindsets are only possible for citizen men engaging in Roman culture, not those hired from outside.⁴⁸

To illustrate the effectiveness of the Roman constitution in generating voluntary heroism, Polybius selects the story of Horatius Cocles, which is also known to us from Livy, Valerius Maximus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.⁴⁹ For Polybius, however, Cocles is not simply a native hero, but the end result of the deliberate social engineering which he has been describing. Cocles is an example of the Roman self-perpetuated drive to heroism and is not supposed to be extraordinary or unique. Polybius' treatment of the

⁴⁶ Polyb. 6.39.4: τυγχάνει δὲ τούτων οὐκ ἂν ἐν παρατάξει τις ἢ πόλεως καταλήψει τρώση τινὰς ἢ σκυλεύση τῶν πολεμίων, ἀλλ' ἂν ἐν ἀκροβολισμοῖς ἢ τισιν ἄλλοις τοιούτοις καιροῖς, ἐν οἷς μηδεμίᾳς ἀνάγκης οὔσης κατ' ἄνδρα κινδυνεύειν αὐτοὶ τινες ἐκουσίως καὶ κατὰ προαίρεσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τοῦτο διδώσι.

⁴⁷ The Romans in general: Polyb. 6.54.4; Cocles: Polyb. 6.55.3, see below.

⁴⁸ Although mercenaries could hypothetically be exposed to this culture by campaigning in the army, the practice in the army is a reflection and extension of the culture in Rome itself.

⁴⁹ Livy 2.10, Val. Max. 3.2.1, Cocles survives in these and all other extant versions, cf. Dion. Hal. 5. 23.

story goes a long way to abstracting the account and making it generic and typical instead of startling or unusual. Several facets of the narrative work to produce this effect. In the other extant accounts of the story, the incident takes place during the war versus Lars Porsenna of Clusium in 508 B.C., but Polybius obscures several of the details, including the date, context, and enemy faced. The major elements of the story are the same as the other extant versions, with Cocles fighting on the bridge until the Romans manage to break it, at which point he jumped into the Tiber. The whole story bears closer examination:

It is narrated that when Horatius Cocles was engaged in combat with two of the enemy at the far end of the bridge over the Tiber that lies in the front of the town, he saw large reinforcements coming up to help the enemy, and fearing lest they should force the passage and get into town, he turned round and called to those behind him to retire and cut the bridge with all speed. His order was obeyed, and while they were cutting the bridge, he stood to his ground receiving many wounds, and arrested the attack of the enemy who were less astonished at his physical strength than at his endurance and courage. The bridge once cut, the enemy was prevented from attacking; and Cocles, plunging into the river in full armor as he was, deliberately [προαίρεσιν] sacrificed his life, regarding the safety of his country and the glory which in future would attach to his name as of more importance than his present existence and the years of life which remained to him. Such, if I am not wrong, is the eager emulation of achieving noble deeds engendered in the Roman youth by their institutions.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Polyb. 6.55: Κόκλην γὰρ λέγεται τὸν ὤρατιον ἐπικληθέντα, διαγωνιζόμενον πρὸς δύο τῶν ὑπεναντίων ἐπὶ τῷ καταντικρὺ τῆς γεφύρας πέρατι τῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ Τιβέριδος, ἢ κείται πρὸ τῆς πόλεως, ἐπεὶ πλήθος ἐπιφερόμενον εἶδε τῶν βοηθούντων τοῖς πολεμίοις, δέισαντα μὴ βιασάμενοι παραπέσωσιν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, βοᾶν ἐπιστραφέντα τοῖς κατόπιν ὡς τάχος ἀναχωρήσαντας διασπᾶν τὴν γέφυραν. τῶν δὲ πειθαρχησάντων, ἕως μὲν οὗτοι διέσπων, ὑπέμενε τραυμάτων πλήθος ἀναδεχόμενος καὶ διακατέσχε τὴν ἐπιφορὰν τῶν ἐχθρῶν, οὐχ οὕτως τὴν δύναμιν ὡς τὴν ὑπόστασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τόλμαν καταπεπληγμένων τῶν ὑπεναντίων: διασπασθείσης δὲ τῆς γεφύρας, οἱ μὲν πολέμιοι τῆς ὁρμῆς ἐκωλύθησαν, ὁ δὲ Κόκλης ῥίψας ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις κατὰ προαίρεσιν μετήλλαξε τὸν βίον, περὶ πλείονος ποιησάμενος τὴν τῆς πατρίδος ἀσφάλειαν καὶ τὴν ἐσομένην μετὰ ταῦτα περὶ αὐτὸν εὐκλειαν τῆς παρούσης ζωῆς καὶ τοῦ καταλειπομένου βίου. τοιαύτη τις, ὡς ἔοικε, διὰ τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐθισμῶν ἐγγεννᾶται τοῖς νέοις ὁρμὴ καὶ φιλοτιμία πρὸς τὰ καλὰ τῶν ἔργων.

Polybius omits even basic background details which are attached to the story in other accounts. Valerius Maximus has Cocles facing the “Etruscans,” Dionysius and Livy the army of Lars Porsenna of Clusium, while Polybius only mentions “the enemy.”⁵¹ Both Dionysius and Livy name two men, Herminius and Larcius, who stayed with Cocles until his final stand, and Dionysius gives them the task of relating the message that the bridge must be dismantled.⁵² Polybius, however, has Cocles simply call behind him, which has the effect of giving all the other Romans anonymity. Although Polybius gives Cocles a name, he can hardly avoid it given the fame of the story, and he omits many other distinguishing details. In omitting to mention that the enemy was Lars Porsenna’s army, he obscures the antiquity of the account. Polybius wants to indicate the equivalence in nature between the Romans of his time and the Romans of the past. Abstracted from its context, the story makes Cocles an exemplary product of Roman social engineering.

The idea of the Romans producing a certain style of man may have been currency at the time, for it was a habit of the Elder Cato to neglect to name the generals in his *Origines*; Roman achievements were Roman achievements and ought to belong to no one man in particular.⁵³ For Cato as for Polybius they were indicative of more than one man’s character, but participated in envisioning the defining features and values of the whole state. In all three of the other extant accounts, Cocles escapes with his life. Only in Polybius does he die performing the deed, and this gives the writer an opportunity to expound upon Cocles’ particular mindset. Polybius attributes a line of reasoning to Cocles that he cannot possibly have known. Firstly, Cocles makes a choice (προαίρεσιν)

⁵¹ Val. Max. 3.2.1.; Livy 2.9; Dion. Hal. 5.21.1.

⁵² Livy 2.10.6; Dion. Hal. 5.23.2.

⁵³ Nep. *Cato* 3.4; Plin.(E), *NH*. 8.5.

to sacrifice his life, that is, he willingly and voluntarily subordinates his own interests to the interests of the state. Secondly, Polybius attributes a reasoned line of argumentation to him, mentioning his weighing of the life remaining to him against the needs of the state. The emphasis once more rests on psychology, how Roman culture had encouraged men--and especially soldiers--to think in a particular way.

Conclusion

Polybius, in his own analytical and evaluative way, concurred with the message of the legendary Marcus Curtius: the soldier had a privileged role to play in the society, history, and destiny of Rome. He portrays the Romans answering the question of why they were conquerors in blunt terms: because it was destined to be so, because their troops were held to the standard of choosing victory or choosing death. Polybius himself answers this question by demonstrating that Roman success hinged on the psychological makeup of the soldier, his willingness to sacrifice himself for Rome, and the culture which honored and celebrated those sacrifices in the hope of encouraging others to emulate them. A further discussion of Polybius' information about the Roman army, examined from a psychological perspective, can be found in Chapter Six.

The Greek writer Polybius was looking for the factors lying behind an extraordinary success story, and although he did not think much of the individual soldier, his Roman soldiers in general make a large contribution to Rome's greatness. It is the Roman writer Livy who shows us the limitations of the soldier figure and demonstrates how fragile is that figure, and how fragile is his relationship with the state. Polybius

shows us that the soldier figure is about an attitude, about free will, and dedication to Rome. Livy will show us that soldiering is quite simply about the physical activities associated with the military.

Chapter Three

Falling in, Falling Out: The Fragility of the Soldier's Identity in Livy

I. Introduction

In chapter one I argued that service as a soldier was the most important contribution that the Roman citizen made to the state, and for this reason the soldier figure was considered to be greatly significant. In chapter two we saw that Polybius regarded that soldier as integral to the Roman national character, someone with the desire to exert himself for Rome and encouraged to do so, his willingness to fight a reason for Rome's extraordinary success. In this chapter, we see how Livy treats the identity of the soldier as synonymous with soldierly activity. It is in performing and continuing to perform military activities that the soldier finds his identity. Livy's treatment of the soldier contributes to the impression of the great significance attached to the soldier figure in the Roman world. Not everyone can be called a soldier, only those who continue to perform within a role - the parameters of which are taken very seriously.

The soldier group in Livy is permeable, by which I mean that others are able to integrate themselves within the soldier group and become to all intents and purposes a soldier. It is also fragile, by which I mean that an individual defined as a soldier can be ejected, rejected, or otherwise fall out of that group when he is considered to be no longer living up to the soldier's role. In section two, I show that Livy uses persistence in the soldier's role the defining characteristic of the good soldier. In section three, I address individuals who are able to assimilate the soldier's identity by performing the activities of

soldiers, highlighting the stories of Cloelia and the *volones*, or slave volunteers of the Punic Wars. In the final section I show how the soldier's identity is fragile, using Livy's description of the treatment of the soldiers who were captured at the battle of Cannae, whose appeal for ransom was rejected by the senate on the grounds that they had ceased to fight too soon, and so had ceased to be soldiers of Rome.

II. Livy, the Soldier, and *Virtus*

The soldier in Livy is a figure trapped in a paradox. The good soldier is characterized by the attribute *virtus*. *Virtus*, however, does not always represent extraordinary effort or an exemplary set of activities. Its truest definition, as it is used in Livy, is someone who displays fidelity to the soldier's duties and role. The good soldier is a good soldier when he performs and continues to perform military duties: A good soldier simply by being a soldier at all. There are two figures in Livy whose stories help to elucidate this point: the heroic exemplar Horatius Cocles and the ordinary soldier Spurius Ligustinus. Although their treatment by Livy is very different, for Cocles is a famous and celebrated hero, and Ligustinus a stalwart and unremarkable centurion everyman, they share the important quality of *virtus*. Cicero declared that a man should not be drawn away from his duty by studies, for, "the whole glory of *virtus* is in activity."¹ Such is also the case with Cocles and Ligustinus, whose *virtus* consists in persistence.

Horatius Cocles is an exemplary figure, and his story is part of a tradition of stories intended to resonate with their Roman audiences and cause others to emulate the

¹ Cic. *Off.* 1.6.19: *virtutis enim laus omnis in actione consistit.*

deeds described.² Referred to as exemplarity, the study of these stories forms part of a much more general dialogue about how the ancients understood their present and future by means of utilizing their past.³ When Polybius used Cocles as an example of a cultural product, he indicated this phenomenon, that the Cocles story was disseminated and made famous in the hope that his deed would be reproduced. Important to Livy's treatment of Cocles is why his deed was valued. When Livy writes that "the State showed its gratitude for such courage [*virtus*]", this *virtus* can be shown to consist in the act of persistent soldiering.⁴

As Cocles defends the bridge, Livy emphasises that he is the only soldier left engaged in the physical act of soldiering. He is the only Roman soldier to stand his ground in the face of panic from the rest of his troops, "He happened to be on guard at the bridge when he saw the Janiculum taken by a sudden assault and the enemy rushing down from it to the river, whilst his own men, a panic-struck mob, were deserting their posts and throwing away their arms."⁵ A little later in the account he is characterized by his steadfastness: "At length shame roused them [the Etruscan enemy] to action, and raising a shout they hurled their javelins from all sides on their solitary foe. He caught them on his outstretched shield, and with unshaken resolution kept his place on the bridge

² For a detailed discussion of the story of Horatius Cocles and the encouragement of emulation, see Roller (2004), 41–56.

³ There is a wide range of scholarship addressing the various aspects of this topic. See, as an illustrative cross-section of its application: For the utilization of the past in historiography, Fornara (1983), 104–20; Herkommer (1968), 128–36; Marincola (1997); for the use of the past as propaganda, Evans (1992); On the significance of ancestor masks, Flower (1996); the use of the past in a military context, Lendon (2005); Chaplin (2000) deals with aspects of how exempla are used within the text of Livy by "focalizer" figures, those persons within the text who themselves cite and use historical exempla. Feichtinger (1992) and Feldherr (1998) have considered Livy's contemporary audience as recipients of his historical exempla.

⁴ Grata erga tantam uirtutem ciuitas fuit.

⁵ Livy 2.10: Qui positus forte in statione pontis cum captum repentino impetu Ianiculum atque inde citatos decurrere hostes uidisset trepidamque turbam suorum arma ordinesque relinquere.

with firmly planted foot.”⁶ The tale of Cocles is about bravery, but that bravery is revealed by Cocles’ refusal to give up, and the fact that he persistently continues his soldiering duties in the face of adversity when others do not. When Livy says that Cocles was rewarded for his *virtus*, Roller comments that this *virtus* carries the meaning of “bravery or steadfastness in battle.”⁷

The story of Cocles was a semi-legendary tale intended to be an example of extreme bravery, but we find that in Livy’s description of the somewhat ordinary soldier Ligustinus, *virtus* is judged by the same theme: persistent soldiering. Ligustinus was a second century career soldier who argued for re-enrollment when the Romans were raising troops for the war against Perseus in 171 B.C. He had served under many notable commanders, from whom he received promotion, among them T. Quinctius Flaminius, M. Porcius Cato, Q. Fulvius Flaccus and Ti. Sempronius Gracchus. This Ligustinus is so unremarkably portrayed that Bernard named him as an example of a “representative” individual, one who emerges barely from the anonymous mass in order to illustrate a particular group in the *Populus Romanus*.⁸ In Bernard’s schema, there are only three types of men who emerge from the masses in Livy: ordinary men, great men, and heroes.⁹

⁶ Livy 2.10: pudor deinde commouit aciem, et clamore sublato undique in unum hostem tela coniciunt. Quae cum in obiecto cuncta scuto haesissent, neque ille minus obstinatus ingenti pontem obtineret gradu.

⁷ Roller (2004), 5.

⁸ Bernard (2000), 309-58. He refers to groups such as women, soldiers, and even magistrates deprived of the type of historical circumstances that might have made them great. Bernard’s concept of Livy highlighting individuals is similar to that of L’hoir (1990), 221-4. L’hoir, who observes that soldiers in Livy are distinguished by epithets such as *impiger*, *fortis*, or *acer*, which serve as shorthand for an otherwise undeveloped personality.

⁹ Bernard (2000), 333: *Les hommes ordinaires, les grandes hommes, les héros*. These categories consider individuals in regard to their portrayal over their whole lives rather than in a particular episode. Heroes, like exemplars, are visually vivid and described by Livy as drawing the gaze of others, but their story unfolds over a long period of time rather than being concentrated in one episode or action. Bernard cites Scipio Africanus and Camillus as examples of heroes of this type. Great men are those who emerge from the *populus romanus* to an exceptional degree. They are men like Fabius Cunctator, Cato, or Quinctius

Ligustinus begins his speech by a process of self-defining. He introduces himself with his tribe and family circumstances, then goes on to detail each of his experiences in the army and the honors given to him at each stage of his career as he rose up the ranks to *primus pilus*. He has been decorated thirty four times and received civic crowns for saving the life of a citizen six times. Ligustinus concludes his speech with a promise and an endorsement of his abilities:

So far as anyone who is raising troops judges me to be an efficient soldier, I am not going to plead excuses. What rank the military tribunes think that I deserve is for them to decide; I will take care that no man shall surpass me in courage [*virtus*]; that I always have done so, my commanders and fellow-campaigners bear witness.¹⁰

Ligustinus was a career soldier but also a successful one, which he expresses by means of his rewards and crowns as indicators of his courage, and specific reference to *virtus* in the past and his dedication to maintain that *virtus* in the future. His *virtus* consists in his long dedicated years of service, his willingness to serve once more, and his success and achievements as a soldier. Ligustinus' *virtus* is not simply performing the acts for which he was decorated, but continuing and persisting as a soldier.

Moore, in his study of the usage of the term *virtus* in Livy, argues that he shuns the usage which was becoming currency in his own day, that of a particular virtue or moral excellence, in favor of its earlier, more general meaning of courage and endurance. He concludes that it means "overcoming obstacles, enduring hardships, or performing

Flamininus. These men also live in times which provide opportunities for greatness, and so have in common an exceptional context for their achievements.

¹⁰ Livy 42.34: ipse me, quoad quisquam, qui exercitus scribit, idoneum militem iudicabit, numquam sum excusaturus. quo ordine me dignum iudicent tribuni militum, ipsorum est potestatis; ne quis me uirtute in exercitu praestet, dabo operam; et semper ita fecisse me et imperatores mei et, qui una stipendia fecerunt, testes sunt.

diligently military duties. A soldier's *virtus* is, in short, all that leads to success in battle, with the notable exceptions of skill and wisdom."¹¹ In the cases of Cocles and Ligustinus, their *virtus* derives from persistently being a soldier, no matter how hard continuing to perform soldierly duties might become. As Cicero advised, *virtus* finds its fullest expression in activity. Dedication to soldiering makes one a successful soldier, success is marked by the term *virtus*, and *virtus*, in turn means fidelity to soldiering. The good soldier is characterized by his engagement in soldierly activities, and this hypothesis is confirmed by two instances in which Livy gives an explicit definition of what it means to be a soldier. One we find in an early context, in the mouth of Valerius Corvus, the other appears late in the extant text and belongs to Aemilius Paulus. I shall take the latter case first as it is the fuller of the accounts.

Aemilius is a figure who stands against the tide of corruption and luxury coming from the province of Asia. He is a figure of some authority and reputation, and he defines a few simple responsibilities for the soldier:

It was the soldier's duty to be careful about these three things: To keep his body as strong and agile as possible; to keep his arms in good order, and to have his food ready against any sudden order of his commander. All other matters, he must understand, are under the care of the gods and of his general.¹²

The responsibilities of the soldier are directed towards the act of soldiering. Aemilius, though, emphasizes not the actual act of fighting but the maintenance of a condition suitable for fighting. The soldier must maintain physical prowess and maintain a state of

¹¹ Moore (1989), 6.

¹² Livy 44.34: militem haec tria curare debere, corpus ut quam ualidissimum et pernicissimum habeat, arma apta, cibum paratum ad subita imperia; cetera scire de se dis immortalibus et imperatori suo curae esse. in quo exercitu milites consultant, imperator rumoribus uulgi circumagatur, ibi nihil salutare esse.

readiness with respect to arms and possessions. Aemilius explicitly distances the general's role from that of the soldier, basing the distinction on the discrepancy in responsibility. The soldier's role is primarily physical, involving the condition of the body and maintaining a state of readiness for action. Tactics and other such matters belong to the general. Just as in the definition of *virtus*, the soldier's sphere is everything necessary for successful fighting save skill and wisdom. The soldiers in receipt of this speech, far from protesting their unadorned role in the army, give every indication of wholehearted agreement:

....even the veterans generally confessed that on that day they had for the first time, as though they were raw recruits, learnt what military service meant.¹³

Aemilius' soldiers receive his speech as something which defines the core of soldiering. The soldier is a physical being, an actor whose actions are directed towards the fight, and the veterans approve that this is what it means to be a soldier.

Valerius Corvus describes the work of a soldier somewhat similarly:

His men must not only go into action in full reliance upon their own courage and warlike reputation, but they must also remember under whose auspices and generalship they were going to fight, whether under a man who is only to be listened to provided he is a big talker, courageous only in words, ignorant of a soldier's work, or under one who himself knows how to handle weapons, who can show himself in the front, and do his duty in the melee of battle. "I want you, soldiers," he continued, "to follow my deeds not my words, and to look to me not only for the word of command but also for example."¹⁴

¹³ Livy 44.34: uolgo etiam ueteranis fatentibus se illo primum die, tamquam tirones, quid agendum esset in re militari, didicisse.

¹⁴ Livy 7.32: Cum gloria belli ac uirtute sua quemque fretos ire in aciem debere, tum etiam intueri cuius ductu auspicioque ineunda pugna sit, utrum qui, audiendus dumtaxat, magnificus adhortator sit, uerbis tantum ferox, operum militarium expertus, an qui et ipse tela tractare, procedere ante signa, uersari media in mole pugnae sciat. "Facta mea, non dicta uos, milites" inquit, "sequi uolo, nec disciplinam modo sed exemplum etiam a me petere."

Valerius thus describes the soldier's work as embodied in three things, all of which pertain to the act of fighting. He must be skilled with weaponry, maintain a position before the standard, and sustain fighting in the midst of a battle situation. A soldier's duty, in short, is to continue engaging in the actions which make him a soldier.

III. Permeability

The manner in which soldiers appear in Livy makes it difficult to discuss them as a "group" or "set". They are not soldiers because they possess a permanent characteristic which binds them together, such as status or gender. The soldier not only displays *virtus* through continued soldiering, but he can only sustain his position as a soldier through military activities. As a consequence, the soldier group in Livy has two important qualities: it is permeable, and it is fragile. It is permeable because it is possible for individuals to become soldiers by performing like soldiers- even if those individuals originate from marginalized sections of society which would normally be ineligible for the military. It is fragile because it is possible for individuals acting as soldiers, and identified as soldiers, to find themselves excluded or ejected from the military if they cease to perform the actions of soldiers. There is one further consideration pertaining to the soldier group, which is that at the moment of transition when an individual is deemed to have become a soldier or to no longer be a soldier, that transition must be sanctioned by a witnessing audience. The individual acts in a certain manner to acquire the soldier's

identity, but there must be witnesses to those acts, who decide if the deeds are the deeds of soldiers. The inherent value of the deed is decided by its audience.

My first case study of an individual who takes on a soldier's identity is the maiden Cloelia. As a woman, she is an unlikely soldier. Women in Livy are generally non-combatant and even frequently act as a force for peace. In the famous actions of the Sabine women, they insert themselves between the warring Roman and Sabine men.¹⁵ Under threat from Coriolanus and the Volscians, it is Rome's women who send embassy to Coriolanus, and by using "tears and lamentations [*precibus lacrimisque*]" manage to dissuade Coriolanus from his design to attack Rome.¹⁶ Elsewhere, women are specifically described as non-combatant; left at home waiting for news during the battle of the Metaurus river, the women engage in prayer because they are otherwise unable to help.¹⁷ Women and children are to be protected, in particular their chastity.¹⁸ To take up arms against their own women, as in the case of Verginius who is described as having been "armed against his daughter [*dextram patris in filiam armauerit*]" is a perversion of the natural order.¹⁹ Women are not cast in an active role, but are usually portrayed as being sheltered or protected by the soldiers.

The story of Cloelia is unusual because she displays none of the usual passive female traits, instead performing a set of actions which result in her taking on the identity of the soldier. Cloelia is a semi-legendary figure who appears in Livy's account of early Rome, a contemporary of Horatius Cocles and Mucius Scaevola, and associated with the

¹⁵ Livy 1.13.

¹⁶ Livy 2.40.

¹⁷ Livy 27.50.

¹⁸ Protected: Livy 21.13; Chastity: Livy 3.61; 39.15.

¹⁹ Livy 3.57.

same war as the two male exemplars, that versus Lars Porsenna, King of Clusium, dated by Livy to 508 B.C. Cloelia was one of a number of hostages given over to Porsenna in exchange for his retreat, with his army, from Roman territory. Livy explains how Cloelia eluded her Etruscan captors:

The Etruscan camp was situated not far from the river, and the maiden Cloelia, one of the hostages, escaped, unobserved, through the guards and at the head of her sister hostages swam across the river amidst a shower of javelins and restored them all safe to their relatives.²⁰

The story of Cloelia is remarkable because Cloelia's actions closely associated with the stories of Horatius Cocles and Mucius Scaevola, which immediately precede it in Livy's account.²¹ The motifs of the story, the crossing of the river Tiber, and the missiles which rain down upon the heroine as she attempts her escape, are both elements of the story of Horatius Cocles. Cocles, after he had deterred the Etruscan troops long enough to have his Roman companions break the bridge, plunged into the Tiber and evaded the enemy's missiles while he made his escape. The story of Mucius Scaevola is also explicitly linked by Livy to the story of Cloelia. Scaevola, we are told, was caught in an attempt to assassinate Porsenna, and plunged his hand into the fire and held it there as it burned as a demonstration of the determination of Roman youth. This example so invigorated the Romans that "even women were incited to great deeds" [*feminae quoque ad publica decora excitatae*].²² Cloelia's acts are treated by Livy as a direct consequence of witnessing, and then emulating, male heroism.

²⁰ Livy 2.13: cum castra Etruscorum forte haud procul ripa Tiberis locata essent, frustrata custodes, dux agminis uirginum inter tela hostium Tiberim tranauit, sospitesque omnes Romam ad propinquos restituit.

²¹ Cf. Roller (2004), 29-31.

²² Livy 2.13.6.

Cloelia's deeds are closely associated with the two male figures whose stories precede hers, but it is the reactions of her contemporary audience which cement her transition into the soldier group. First is the reaction which Livy puts in the mouth of Lars Porsenna himself, who demands that Cloelia be returned to him, but is so struck with admiration that he declares her deed greater than those of Cocles and Scaevola. And perhaps the reader is to assume that Cloelia the *virgo*, the "leader of a band of maidens" [*dux agminis virginum*]" –here described in military language, has managed a greater deed by warrant of the fact that she overcame the natural disadvantage of her femininity, except for the fact that Livy, and the contemporary Romans he discusses, treat her exactly as if she were a soldier. Cloelia is rewarded for her *virtus*, a word which both in its etymology and its contemporary meaning indicated a manly action, and is particularly associated with martial achievement.²³ Even more startlingly, Livy writes:

When peace had been established, the Romans rewarded this new valor in a woman with a new kind of honor, an equestrian statue, which was set up on the summit of the Sacred Way, and represented the maiden seated on a horse.²⁴

While the fact that Cloelia is a woman is still an important part of the story and has not been forgotten by Livy or, it is implied, the contemporary Romans, she is honored like a man and a soldier. MacDonnell in *Roman Manliness* has argued that "the mounted warrior was the preeminent symbol of *virtus*" and that "equestrian representations in general were associated with the martial qualities inherent in *virtus*."²⁵ So not only is

²³ Moore (1989), 6.

²⁴ Livy 2.13.11: Pace redintegrata Romani nouam in femina uirtutem nouo genere honoris, statua equestri, donauere; in summa Sacra uia fuit posita uirgo insidens equo.

²⁵ MacDonnell (2006), 154.

Cloelia directly attributed *virtus*, but her equestrian statue explicitly links her to *virtus* and martial achievement. Hölscher and others have been skeptical about the veracity of this statue, believing it to be a fiction.²⁶ It is not relevant to this discussion whether the statue itself existed or not, for Livy states it as true, attending no qualification, doubt, or surprise at the unusual equestrian statue which serves as Cloelia's reward. Livy's own statement that equestrian statues were a rare honor in this period seems confirmed by his own silence and that of other sources; only three other equestrian statues are recorded from the beginnings of Rome down to the Hannibalic war.²⁷ Cloelia, when she acted in a martial way, received treatment appropriate to her actions, not her gender. She performed the deeds of a soldier, and the Romans treated her as one.

The second example of the individuals transitioning into a soldierly identity is the emergency army of slaves raised in the midst of the crisis after Cannae. These men not only have their transition into the soldier group sanctioned by the contemporary Roman audience, but it is done at the instigation of Roman citizens, who deliberately initiate and manage it. The method of making slaves into Roman soldiers is far more complicated and nuanced than simply asking the slaves to fight, and I will argue that the transition involves not just a change of role, but a change in identity which is taken extremely seriously.

After their bruising loss in the battle of Cannae in 216 B.C., the Romans were left with a drastic reductions to the number of legionaries in the field. Polybius, most likely following a Carthaginian source, gives the casualty numbers from Cannae at 70,000, Livy

²⁶ See Hölscher (1978), 332-3; also Ogilvie (1965), 267-8.

²⁷ A rare honor: Livy 8.13.9; for the recorded awards of equestrian statues, see McDonnell (2006), 154-7.

at 48,200, and other writers various numbers in-between.²⁸ Brunt's estimate, based on the number of legions mentioned serving, raised, and destroyed both before and after the war, is that the Romans lost 30,000 men, of whom only 15,000 would have been citizen legionaries.²⁹ All of these figures suggest a serious shortage of manpower for the army, which is confirmed by the actions of the Romans in the aftermath of the battle. They appointed as dictator M. Iunius Peta, who enlisted four new legions consisting of men held in prison for debt, boys under the usual limit of seventeen years old, recruits from the Latin confederacy and allies, and 8,000 slave volunteers, known as *volones*.³⁰

The scholarship regarding the *volones* has revolved around two principle aspects of the story, the legal question of at exactly which point these slaves received their manumission, and the attendant question, pertaining to intellectual history, of whether the Romans sacrificed the principle that the soldier ought to be a land-owning citizen in favor of expediency. Referencing this situation, Koortbojian called the image of the citizen soldier a "fiction", but apart from these *volones*, there is little evidence of military recruitment of men who did not at least belong to the qualifying property class, called the *assidui*.³¹ The *volones* are the startling exception, for Rouland and Welwei have both argued strongly that manumission took place for these men only after their service had

²⁸ Polyb. 3. 117.4, for his Carthaginian source see Walbank, *Commentary* I, 440; Livy 22.49.15; the other writers who record numbers are Appian, at 50,000 (Han.25); Plutarch gives the same number (Fab.16.8), and Quintilian gives 60,000 (Inst. 8.6.26).

²⁹ Brunt (1971b), 419.

³⁰ Livy 22.57.9-11 and 23.14.3-4; App. Han. 27; Val.Max. 7.6.1 (who gives their numbers as 24,000 strong, in a direct contradiction to Livy, who gives the total manpower raised by Peta at 25,000; Livy 23.14.2ff).

³¹ Koortbojian (2002), 34. On the complete absence of reference in the sources to any instance of non-*assidui* being recruited into the legions between the Hannibalic war and the time of Marius, see Rich (1983), 288-92. In this case, the argument *ex silencio* is rendered more legitimate by the probability that the property qualification was extremely low.

been successful, meaning that they were quite literally slaves under arms.³² In this discussion, I will be focusing on Livy's treatment of the *volones* as slaves in active service, and in particular how he describes and interprets this hybrid identity.

When the new legions had been raised, the first task was to arm them. The Romans were short of men but they were short of weapons as well, and so the levies were accompanied by the removal of spoils from the temples for use as weapons.³³ The process of arming the slaves is also the first step in their transitioning identity. For Livy and his audience in the Augustan period, the arming of slaves must have had alarming associations— not only had the conspirator Catiline recruited slaves against the state, but more recently Augustus had represented Sextus Pompey as a pirate for the practice of freeing slaves to serve with him in the Sicilian war.³⁴ In this case, however, the associations of the weapons given to the *volones* are firmly entrenched in the past, not the future. The *legiones Cannenses* whom the *volones* had replaced (discussed below), had tried to legitimate their disgraceful surrender by claiming a past precedent- the ransom of prisoners from the Gauls after the battle at the Allia River.³⁵ The past had the power to sanction and to provide legitimate force, and this legitimacy is what was handed over to the slave legions along with the weapons which were the prizes of past Roman military success. Jaeger points to such spoils as the key in Livy's narrative to offset the dignity of the past with the innovation of the present, "the *spolia* co-opt this makeshift army into the

³² Rouland (1977), 45-56; Welwei (1988), 7-8, 11.

³³ Livy 22.57. While he does not say explicitly that the spoils themselves landed in the hands of the slaves, his language implies a close correlation between the two events.

³⁴ On Catiline's use of slaves see Sall. *Cat.* 24.4; 44.5, 46.3; 50.1. On Sextus Pompey see Aug. *RG* 25.1 and Syme (1939), 228. On the associations that a Roman audience might have made with armed slaves, in particular a Plautine audience, see Leigh (2004), 26-8.

³⁵ Livy 22.59.

community by equipping it with the dignity and triumphs of the past.”³⁶ The *volones* gain a pseudo-heritage, in which carrying the weapons won by Roman soldiers is the first step to becoming Roman soldiers.

The new soldiers were placed under the generalship of Sempronius Gracchus, and one of the *imperator*’s first concerns was to obscure the past identity of the slaves and eliminate any division within his army based on status:

In carrying out these exercises, the general's main object-and he had given similar instructions to the officers-was that there should be no class-feeling in the ranks, through the slaves being twitted with their former condition; the old soldiers were to regard themselves as on a perfect equality with the recruits, the free men with the slaves; all to whom the *populus Romanus* had entrusted her standards and her arms were to be regarded as equally honorable, equally well-born.³⁷

Gracchus invokes the *populus Romanus* as the power bestowing legitimacy upon the troops. It has given over her “standards and arms” [*arma sua signaque*] to these men, or, in other words, the *populus Romanus* is the authority by which they became soldiers. As Roman soldiers, Gracchus bans the qualification of the men’s status. There must be no old soldiers, new soldiers, or slave soldiers, only soldiers. The underlying principle of this declaration is that the treatment of men as equal will lead to equality, and that obscuring a man’s previous identity will endow him with a new one. This is, in fact, what Livy tells us happens:

The soldiers were quite as anxious to obey these instructions as the officers were to enforce them, and in a short time the men had become

³⁶ Jaeger (1997), 103.

³⁷ Livy 23.35: Inter quae maxima erat cura duci—itaque legatis tribunisque praeceperat—ne qua exprobratio cuiquam ueteris fortunae discordiam inter ordines sereret; uetus miles tironi, liber uoloni sese exaequare sineret; omnes satis honestos generososque ducerent quibus arma sua signaque populus Romanus commisisset.

so fused together that it was almost forgotten what condition of life each man had been in before he became a soldier.³⁸

The identity of the *volones*, like that of Cloelia, has transitioned from one group to the other. The slaves are treated by their fellows, officers, and Livy himself as plainly soldiers, and although, as mentioned above, they are still technically slaves of the Roman state, they perform in Livy's narrative and, we are led to believe, act on the ground simply as Roman legionaries. The issue of their slave status arose again, however, when in 214 B.C. these legions engaged the Carthaginian general Hanno close to Beneventum. At this time, indications of discontent about their station had started to affect the legions:

His [Gracchus'] legions were composed mostly of volunteer slaves who had made up their minds to earn their liberty, without murmuring, by another year's service rather than demand it openly. He had, however, on leaving his winter quarters noticed that there were discontented rumblings going on in the army, men were asking whether they would ever serve as free men. In consequence of this he had sent a dispatch to the senate in which he stated that the question was not so much what they wanted as what they deserved; they had rendered him good and gallant service up to that day, and they lacked nothing of the standard of regular soldiers except in the matter of freedom.³⁹

When the slave soldiers start agitating about their station; when they begin, once more, to talk about their status, then they take on shades of that slave identity. In one respect, freedom, they fall short of the *exemplum iusti militis*, or "standard of a regular soldier."

³⁸ Livy 23.35: Ea non maiore cura praecepta ab ducibus sunt quam a militibus observata breuique tanta concordia coaluerant omnium animi ut prope in obliuionem ueniret qua ex condicione quisque esset miles factus.

³⁹ Livy 24.14: legiones magna ex parte uolonum habebat, qui iam alterum annum libertatem tacite mereri quam postulare palam maluerant. senserat tamen hibernis egrediens murmur in agmine esse quaerentium, en unquam liberi militaturi essent, scripseratque senatui non tam quid desiderarent quam quid meruissent: bona fortique opera eorum se ad eam diem usum neque ad exemplum iusti militis quicquam eis praeter libertatem deesse.

It is not this factor, however, which Livy shows us causes the problem, it is that breaking the silence about the origin of these soldiers precipitates a fragmentation of their soldierly identity. As soon as they themselves act as slaves by agitating for their freedom, and Gracchus as a consequence makes special rules for them, their ability to act as soldiers was handicapped. Gracchus' rule for the coming battle is as follows:

Whoever brought back the head of an enemy would be at once by his orders declared to be a free man; whoever quitted his place in the ranks he would punish with a slave's death. Every man's fortune was in his own hands. It was not he alone that guaranteed their liberty, but the consul Marcellus also and the whole of the senate whom he had consulted and who had left the question of their liberty to him. He then read the dispatch from Marcellus and the resolution passed in the senate. These were greeted with a loud and ringing cheer. They demanded to be led at once to battle and pressed him forthwith to give the signal.⁴⁰

At first it seems as if this declaration has the desired effect. Just as in the case of Aemilius' troops, the reaction is the reaffirmed commitment to warfare shown by the preparation of arms. Yet Gracchus is treating the soldiers as slaves. He has changed the object of the upcoming battle for these men from the soldier's goal of fighting successfully, to a slave's goal of earning his own personal freedom. The choices are a slave's choices; freedom or death, not the soldier's choice of success or disgrace. The idea of "Rome" had once sheltered these soldiers from a slave's identity, endowing them with the legitimacy of Rome's authority. Now, the senate is used as a body which sanctions their freedom. Originally, soldiers, general, and Rome itself had accepted these

⁴⁰ Livy 24.14: qui caput hostis rettulisset, eum se extemplo liberum iussurum esse; qui loco cessisset, in eum serui supplicio animaduersurum; suam cuique fortunam in manu esse. libertatis auctorem eis non se fore solum sed consulem M. Marcellum, sed uniuersos patres, quos consultos ab se de libertate eorum sibi permisisse. litteras inde consulis ac senatus consultum recitauit, ad quae clamor cum ingenti adsensu est sublatus. pugnam poscebant signumque ut daret extemplo ferociter instabant.

troops as occupying the identity of simply “soldier”. At this moment, soldiers, general and senate are united in treating the troops as slaves, and it becomes evident during the battle that Gracchus’ incentive is ill-conceived:

Nothing hampered the Romans more than the setting a price upon the heads of their foes, the price of liberty, for no sooner had any one made a furious attack upon an enemy and killed him than he lost time in cutting off his head-a difficult matter in the tumult and turmoil of the battle-and then, as their right hands were occupied in holding the heads all the best soldiers were no longer able to fight, and the battle was left to the slow and the timid.⁴¹

This incident reveals that the slave soldiers’ identities are in competition. The soldiers had begun as slaves of the state, but the obscuring of their origins and condition had allowed them to take on the identity of soldier. When the soldiers agitate for their freedom, they are treated as slaves. They fight like soldiers, but as soon as they achieve the momentary success of killing an enemy, their desire for freedom causes them to stop fighting, or stop acting as a soldier and act in a specific way on account of their slave identity. The flexible and fragile identities are in constant struggle, slave identity and soldier identity coming to the fore depending on how the slave soldiers act, and how they are treated by others.

Gracchus revises his policy twice more; once to assure the soldiers that he has witnessed their courage and they may throw away the enemy heads, and once more at the end of the battle when he makes rout of the enemy the new price of freedom- this latter marking the actions of a soldiers, not slaves trying to become soldiers. The incident is

⁴¹ Livy 24.15: nam ut quisque hostem impigre occiderat, primum capite aegre inter turbam tumultumque abscidendo terebat tempus; deinde occupata dextra tenendo caput fortissimus quisque pugnator esse desierat, segnibus ac timidis tradita pugna erat.

not the first time in Roman history in which we see the Romans demand proof of prowess as a soldier as the price of being accepted as one. Although Livy's version of the incident was contained in book 13 and is lost to us, we know from the *Periochae* and other sources that a similar treatment attended on prisoners captured by Pyrrhus of Epirus in the battle of Heraclea in 280 B.C.⁴² In this case, a Roman embassy treated for the return of the prisoners, but upon receiving the soldiers back at Rome indicated their displeasure with the men's conduct. A version of the story, deriving from Livy's account, survives from Eutropius' fourth century summary of Roman history⁴³:

The Romans ordered that all the prisoners that Pyrrhus had sent back to Rome should be regarded as infamous [*infames*] because they had been captured while armed. They would not be able to return to their former standing until they had brought back the spoils of two slain enemy soldiers.⁴⁴

The declaration of these men as *infames* indicates marginalization and exclusion, not only in the context of the army, but from Roman society in general. An individual named *infamia* was usually being punished for some crime, and so deprived of citizen rights.⁴⁵ In order to restore themselves to the status of soldiers and the status of Roman citizens, these men must prove themselves in the same arena in which they failed- the battlefield. These men were lucky: as we shall see below, falling out of the soldier's identity was later punished with much harsher treatment.

⁴² Livy. *Per.*13; Flor. 1.13.15; Eutr. 2.11.2-3.

⁴³ It is generally accepted that for the early years of Roman history, Eutropius relied on Livy, perhaps through an intermediate source. Rohrbacher (2002), 49-58; Capozza (1973).

⁴⁴ Eutr. 2.13.2: Romani iusserunt captivos omnes, quos Pyrrus reddiderat, infames haberi, quod armati capi potuissent, nec ante eos ad veterem statum reverti, quam si binorum hostium occisorum spolia retulissent.

⁴⁵ For a discussion of these soldiers and *infamia* see Leigh (2004), 66-70.

IV. Fragility

In regard to figures in the Roman Republic who can assimilate and integrate themselves within the soldier's identity, there are two prevalent factors in that transition: that the person act as a soldier, and that others treat him or her as a soldier. The same standard applies to maintenance of the soldier's identity. A soldier who ceases to act as a soldier and ceases to be regarded as a soldier effectively ceases to be a soldier. Just as the identity can be acquired, it can also be dissolved.

The treatment of the surviving soldiers from the battle of Cannae, the *legiones Cannenses*, is a good illustration of this point. In the battle's aftermath, ten representatives from these captured survivors came before the senate to request that they be ransomed from Hannibal. The fundamental theme of both the soldiers' request, and the senate's debate and eventual reply, is what it means to be a soldier. The question is not just whether they deserve to be ransomed, but whether they are still to be considered soldiers of Rome, or if, by their actions, they have become something entirely different. The central point becomes an examination of their actions, and whether these actions count as sufficiently military and soldierly or not.

Making the case for the soldiers is their leader, who seeks to contextualize the surrender:

We did not give up our arms during the battle from sheer cowardice; standing on the heaps of the slain we kept up the struggle till close on night, and only then did we retire into camp; for the remainder of the day and all through the night we defended our entrenchments; the following day we were surrounded by the victorious army and cut off

from the water, and there was no hope whatever now of our forcing our way through the dense masses of the enemy.⁴⁶

The soldiers, their representative says, fought and continued to fight until it became absolutely unreasonable to do so. He goes on with an attempt to claim and utilize the past in the soldiers' defense, pointing to the example of the Roman soldiers ransomed after the defeat at the Allia river. Just as the *spolia* of previous victories served to endow the slave soldiers with legitimacy and solidify their soldiers' identity, so the leader of the embassy tries to claim a heritage and use it to bestow legitimacy.

According to Livy, there are those who sympathize with his point of view. The crowd of people cried out and appealed for the prisoners to be ransomed, and the senate began to debate with great difference of opinion. Speaking for the opposition in Livy's account is T. Manlius Torquatus, the consul of 235 and 224 B.C., and a very senior figure in the senate. Torquatus himself seems emblematic of the dialogue between past and present in the debate. His very name evokes ideas of antique heroism, for his namesake is the famous soldier T. Manlius Imperiosus Torquatus, who engaged in single combat with a Gaul, defeated him and ripped the bloodied torque from his neck. Livy calls this Torquatus "of ancient and it seemed to many, too harsh severity."⁴⁷ Torquatus, himself something of a relic, embodies the past that the soldiers used to defend their conduct, and his interpretation of that past is distinctly different. Torquatus does not even bother to directly address the argument regarding the Allia. Instead, he makes a statement that

⁴⁶ Livy 22.59: Non enim in acie per timorem arma tradidimus sed cum prope ad noctem superstantes cumulis caesorum corporum proelium extraxissemus, in castra recepimus nos; diei reliquum ac noctem insequentem, fessi labore ac uulneribus, uallum sumus tutati; postero die, cum circumsessi ab exercitu uictore aqua arceremur nec ulla iam per confertos hostes erumpendi spes esset.

⁴⁷ Livy 22.60: priscae ac nimis durae ut plerisque videbatur severitatis.

indicates that the Romans of the past would themselves have rejected the soldiers. If, he says, they had merely requested their ransom, they would have saved him a speech, for “all that would have been necessary would be to remind you that you should maintain the custom and usage handed down from our forefathers by setting an example necessary for military discipline.”⁴⁸ The soldiers had tried to claim the past; Torquatus opens by saying that the past would have rejected them, effectively denying them the sanction and legitimacy of history.

Having in few words denied their claim to the past, Torquatus continues by delivering a critique of the actions taken by the soldiers. This speech weighs the actual against the hypothetical; what the soldiers did, and what they ought to have done. In speaking of the actual, Torquatus casts the soldiers as “citizens”, only when he speaks about the hypothetical does he call them soldiers. This is a sign that they are considered to have failed in making the contribution that they owed the Roman state; asked to perform as soldiers, they did not maintain that status.⁴⁹ If, Torquatus says, they had followed the leadership of Sempronius, who proposed breaking out of the camp, they “would at this moment be soldiers in the Roman camp, not prisoners in the hands of the enemy.”⁵⁰ Torquatus brings up the example of the words of Marcus Calpurnius Flamma during the first Punic War as an illustration of an alternative road the soldiers might have taken:

'Let us die, soldiers' he exclaimed, 'and by our death rescue our blockaded legions from their peril'-if, I say, P. Sempronius had spoken

⁴⁸ Livy 22.60: *quid enim aliud quam admonendi essetis ut morem traditum a patribus necessario ad rem militarem exemplo seruaretis?*

⁴⁹ See Chapter Six below for further exposition of the effect of soldiers labeled as “citizens.”

⁵⁰ Livy 22.60: *milites hodie in castris Romanis non captiui in hostium potestate essent.*

thus, I should not regard you as men, much less as Romans, if none had come forward as the comrade of so brave a man.⁵¹

If the soldiers had allowed Sempronius to lead them out, then they would still be soldiers.

If Sempronius had called upon them, as soldiers, to die, and they had obeyed, they would

be men and Romans. But the fact is they are not. Their actions have rendered them

neither soldiers nor citizens:

It is whilst you are free men, with all your rights as citizens, that you must show your love for your country, or rather, while it is your country and you are its citizens. Now you are showing that love too late, your rights forfeited, your citizenship renounced, you have become the slaves of the Carthaginians. Is money going to restore you to the position which you have lost through cowardice and crime?⁵²

Torquatus here links the physical with the spiritual. The soldiers have physically rendered themselves into the state of slavery, but even ransoming them and bringing them back to Rome will not purify them of the spiritual change in condition caused by their cowardly actions. They have lost the right to be called soldiers, as is evident from Torquatus' terminology, but they have also lost the right to be called citizens.⁵³ It is evident from the continuation of Torquatus' argument that their inappropriate actions

⁵¹ Livy 22.60: "moriatur, milites, et morte nostra eripiamus ex obsidione circumventas legiones", si hoc P. Sempronius diceret, nec uiros quidem nec Romanos uos duceret, si nemo tantae uirtutis exstisset comes.

⁵² Livy 22.60: Liberi atque incolumes desiderate patriam; immo desiderate, dum patria est, dum ciues eius estis. Sero nunc desideratis, deminuti capite, [abalienati iure ciuium] serui Carthaginensium facti. Pretio redituri estis eo unde ignauia ac nequitia abistis?

⁵³ Compare the same sentiment expressed by Marcellus to the soldiers who fled from battle, "I do not seem to myself to be speaking to my army or to Roman soldiers, it is only your bodies and weapons that are the same" (27.13); Publius Scipio's rebuke to his mutinying troops, "Am I to call you Roman citizens-you who have revolted against your country? Can I call you soldiers when you have renounced the authority and auspices of your general, and broken the solemn obligations of your military oath? Your appearance, your features, your dress, your demeanour I recognise as those of my fellow-countrymen, but I see that your actions, your language, your designs, your spirit and temper are those of your country's foes." (28.27); Marcus Servilius to the troops attempting to deny Aemilius Paulus a triumph, "I think I shall call you 'soldiers,' and not 'Quirites,' if that title can at least call up a blush and evoke in you a feeling of shame for the way you have insulted your commander." (45.37)

revolve around the cessation of efforts before it was appropriate to do so. Once more Torquatus contrasts the hypothetical with the actual. First, what the soldiers ought to have done:

But you will say, if they lacked courage to leave the camp they had courage enough to defend it bravely; blockaded for several days and nights, they protected the rampart with their arms, and themselves with the rampart; at last, after going to the utmost lengths of endurance and daring, when every support of life failed, and they were so weakened by starvation that they had not strength to bear the weight of their arms, they were in the end conquered by the necessities of nature more than by the force of arms.⁵⁴

Hypothetically, the actions required of the soldiers were to continue with their soldiering right up to the point where they became physically incapable of doing so. When Torquatus contrasts their actual behavior, it becomes clear that he blames them mainly not for surrendering, but for surrendering too soon:

At daybreak the enemy approached the rampart; within two hours, without trying their fortune in any conflict, they gave up their arms and themselves. This, you see, was their two days' soldiership. When duty called them to keep their line and fight they fled to their camp, when they ought to have fought at the rampart they surrendered their camp; they are useless alike in the field and in the camp.⁵⁵

The crime is very clear. The soldiers stopped soldiering. Instead of acting like soldiers for as long as it was physically possible, they performed only minimal service to the

⁵⁴ Livy 22.60: [at] ad erumpendum e castris defuit animus, ad tutanda fortiter castra animum habuerunt; dies noctesque aliquot obsessi uallum armis, se ipsi tutati uallo sunt; tandem ultima ausi passique, cum omnia subsidia uitae deessent adfectisque fame uiribus arma iam sustinere nequirent, necessitatibus magis humanis quam armis uicti sunt.

⁵⁵ Livy 22.60: Orto sole ab hostibus ad uallum accessum; ante secundam horam, nullam fortunam certaminis experti, tradiderunt arma ac se ipsos. Haec uobis istorum per biduum militia fuit. Cum in acie stare ac pugnare decuerat, [cum] In castra refugerunt; cum pro uallo pugnandum erat, castra tradiderunt, neque in acie neque in castris utiles.

soldier's role: "two-day soldiering [*biduum militia*]". They should have fought on the field, they did not. They should have fought in camp, they did not. They stopped acting like soldiers, and thus became not soldiers but slaves. Slaves they are, and slaves, Torquatus argues, is what they will remain, for he concludes that the men do not deserve to be ransomed.

The soldier then maintains his status as a soldier only so long as he remains faithful to the act of soldiering. If he perpetrates some action considered to be inappropriate to the soldier, most principally, desisting from the act of soldiering before he should, then he ceases to be a soldier by his own act and the opinion of others. The troops, deemed unworthy, are simply abandoned.⁵⁶

V. Conclusion

In 195 B.C., on campaign near Emporiae in Spain, representatives of an allied tribe came to the Elder Cato begging for troops he could hardly spare. Unable to give any real help, he determined instead to merely pretend to send the soldiers. According to Livy's account:

He determined to offer the allies hope instead of actuality: often, and especially in war, appearances have the effect of realities, and the man who believes that help is at hand acts as if he really had it, and by this very confidence, which inspires both hope and daring, is saved.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Compare the treatment of those who avoided surrender and returned themselves intact to the Roman state. These men, as survivors of Cannae, along with the "least vigorous [*minime roboris*]" of the soldiers, are sent to Sicily to rot away the war. (Livy 25.6)

⁵⁷ Livy 34.12: sociis spem pro re ostentandam censet: saepe uana pro ueris, maxime in bello, ualuisse et credentem se aliquid auxilii habere, perinde atque haberet, ipsa fiducia et sperando atque audendo seruatum.

Cato tells us that appearances have the effect of realities, a statement which is pertinent in the cases identified in this chapter. Cloelia becomes what she appears to be: by acting like a soldier, she is interpreted as a soldier by those around her. The slave soldiers, when everyone around them is instructed to treat them simply as soldiers, become so. Similarly, when soldiers stop acting in a soldierly manner, they become marginalized and excluded from the set of soldiers. The key rests in activity, because for Livy, what you do, or how you act, is what you are.

When the *legiones Cannenses* protest their fate, they come close to making a case against this philosophy. They argue that their actions at Cannae are not reflective of their true identity as soldiers, and they beg for another chance to prove their credentials. The senatorial response is to declare that their identity is defined, not by the actions that they might promise to complete in the future, but by the way that they acted at Cannae. Since being a soldier is about the perseverance in military activities, these men are no longer really Roman soldiers. Meaning, as often in the Roman world, is derived from the past, not the future.

In the introduction, we saw how important the soldier figure is to Rome, as a symbol of her eternity and as the citizen's contribution to the state. In Livy's narrative, when the soldier ceased to soldier and hence to serve the state, he lost that significance, no longer a soldier, no longer really Roman. In Livy, the soldier figure becomes meaningless, losing his identity and his value through failure to perform his military duties. It is in the work of Sallust that we will see the real implications of this loss of significance play out most fully. Sallust uses the soldier as a measure by which to gauge

the moral health of the Roman state, and when the soldier figure becomes meaningless, this will be indicative of some extreme and alarming states of affairs.

Chapter Four

A Military Society without a War: Moral Decline and the Soldier in Sallust

I. Introduction

One hundred years after Polybius made the soldier responsible for Rome's ascendancy, Sallust made him responsible for her decline. Their treatments of the soldier figure are complementary, and they treat the same theme, only from a different direction. For Polybius, the soldier willing to lose his life in the state's service was a product of Roman culture and the figure who brought about her success. Sallust also made a connection between Roman society and the soldier, but his soldier is indicative of Roman moral decline, a decayed, ineffective figure. Polybius and Sallust also have complementary visions of the soldier's psychological makeup. The Polybian soldier was indoctrinated into giving his all for the state, validated by a society which valued patriotic principles of all or nothing soldiering, victory or death. The Sallustian soldier no longer has this sense of moral absolutism, but, like the society from which he comes, is confused about what virtue means.

According to Sallust, Roman societal decline is caused by the absence of war against a foreign foe. Roman society endeavored to keep the individual soldier applied to his military duty no matter how long or hard that became. We saw in Livy's account of the *legiones Cannenses* that the soldier who ceases to soldier is indicative of dire circumstances in Rome. Perseverance became the mark of the soldier and induced him to

be the conqueror that the Romans valued and needed. When not-soldiering happens nationwide, it is no wonder that Rome's moral health begins to decline. Sallust blamed a lack of *metus hostilis*, "fear of the enemy." Under threat of war the Romans exercised military efficiency, maintained unity among themselves, and practiced the fair treatment of their allies.

Without this *metus hostilis*, Sallust shows us that vices started to creep into the ways of the Roman people. First *ambitio* and *avaritia*, then *luxuria* during the period marked by the dictatorship of Sulla. As illustration of these new vices, Sallust demonstrates how they manifest themselves in the army of Sp. Postumus Albinus. I use this army as a case study because of the close connection which Sallust makes between the condition of Rome and the story of these troops. Under the negligent leadership of Spurius and his brother, the army becomes inefficient to the point where it barely seems civilized, mistreats its allies, and is unable to co-operate. The soldier lack a unified understanding of how to act, and even the soldier who does display virtue has been rendered meaningless. The soldiers, like society's leaders, no longer truly understand what it means to be Roman. Without war, Rome the military society simply does not know what to do with itself, and the Roman soldier who has no clearly articulated guideline for virtue does not know how to perform. The significant soldier who brought about Rome's success becomes ineffectual and essentially meaningless.

II. The Disappearance of *Metus Hostilis*

Sallust demonstrates and exemplifies the decline of society using the figure of the soldier. As the root of this decline he blames the disappearance of *metus hostilis*. The idea of *metus hostilis*, “fear of the enemy,” occurs in earlier political thought.¹ It refers to the concept that the threat of an enemy acted as a factor which regulated a state’s own conduct by necessitating that it maintain internal harmony and readiness to meet an external threat. In Rome, *metus hostilis* was always connected to Nasica’s argument with Cato regarding the fate of Carthage.²

When Rome finally defeated Carthage in 146 B.C. there was an argument over whether it should be destroyed or not. The debate raged between Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica, consul of 162 and 155 and *pontifex maximus*, and M. Porcius Cato Censorius. Cato wished Carthage destroyed, while Nasica argued vehemently for its preservation on the grounds that Roman fear of the Carthaginians kept them in a state of constant readiness for war and thus in a sound moral state. This disagreement was famous and Nasica’s words regarding the reasons why it was necessary to secure Carthage’s continued existence were traditionally considered to be prophetic.³

An account of the long dispute between Cato and Nasica survives to us through a fragment of Diodorus Siculus, preserved in the excerpts of ancient writers prepared as

¹ It appears in Xenophon, *Cyr.* 3.1.26; Plato, *Leg.* 3.698 B ff.; Aristotle, *Pol.* 6. 1334a-b; Polyb. 6.18; 6.57.5; 32.25.3 ff.; 32.13.6.

² Sallust is thought to have taken the idea of *metus hostilis* from Posidonius (Klinger (1928), 165-92; Earl [1966a], 47), who mentioned Nasica. Although Sallust never does himself, the story of Nasica and his argument about *metus hostilis* was widely famous. See Syme (1964), 249-50; Earl (1966a), 47.

³ In addition to the version of Diodorus studied below, the record of the debate exists in Flor. 1.31.5 (prosperity should begin to have a demoralizing effect); App. *Pun.* 69; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 27 (Nasica’s opposition to Cato: the wantonness of the Roman people would come to control the senate). Although the same sentiments are evident in all, their traditional attribution to Nasica himself has been challenged, see Lintott (1972), 633; Astin (1967), 270 ff; Gelzer (1931), 261-99 *contra* Hoffman (1960), 304-44. Earl (1966a), 47 ff.; Lintott (1972), 627ff.

historical anthologies in the 10th century for Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.⁴

Diodorus describes Nasica's argument as follows:

As long as Carthage survived, the fear that she generated compelled the Romans to live together in harmony and to rule their subjects equitably and with credit to themselves- much the best means to maintain and extend an empire; but once the rival city was destroyed, it was only too evident that there would be civil war at home, and that hatred for the governing power would spring up among the allies because of the rapacity and lawlessness to which the Roman magistrates would subject them.⁵

Nasica predicts two major consequences of the removal of threats to Rome, disunity and corruption. As long as Carthage poses a threat to Rome, the Romans themselves are compelled to maintain an internal unity and rule their allies in such a way as to maintain a harmonious relationship with them. Without this check on Roman behavior, the Roman magistrates will mistreat the allies, and those allies will turn on Rome. Then Rome will turn against itself in civil war as a consequence of its internal disunity.

The very concept of Rome being held together by *metus hostilis* places a huge amount of emphasis on the military. External war or the threat of external war is all which keeps Rome from turning in upon itself, indicating that it is military interests which keep the state in a harmonious order. This is the same sentiment which was in

⁴ The standard edition of these fragments is Weidmann's *Excerpta historica iussu Imp. Constantini Porphyrogeniti confecta* (1903-1910). The fragments which concern Diodorus only are to be found in editions of his complete works: see F. Vogel and C. T. Fischer (Teubner, 1888-1906); with Eng. trans.: C. H. Oldfather and others (Loeb, 1933-67); with Fr. trans.: F. Chamoux and others (Budé, 1972-).

⁵ Diod. Sic. 34.33.5-6: πρὸς δὲ τούτοις σωζομένης μὲν τῆς Καρχηδόνας ὁ ἀπὸ ταύτης φόβος ἠνάγκαζεν ὁμονοεῖν τοὺς Ῥωμαίους καὶ τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων ἐπιεικῶς καὶ ἐνδόξως ἄρχειν· ὧν οὐδὲν κάλλιον ἐστὶν πρὸς ἡγεμονίας διαμονὴν τε καὶ αὐξήσιν· ἀπολομένης δὲ τῆς ἀντιπάλου πόλεως πρόδηλος ἦν ἐν μὲν τοῖς πολίταις ἐμφύλιος πόλεμος ἐσόμενος, ἐκ δὲ τῶν συμμάχων ἀπάντων μῖσος εἰς τὴν ἡγεμονίαν διὰ τὴν εἰς αὐτοὺς ἐκ τῶν ἀρχόντων πλεονεξίαν τε καὶ παρανομίαν.

evidence in the story of Marcus Curtius and in Polybius' treatment of the soldier as the keystone of Rome's success. The soldier made Rome successful and bought her eternity, but in Nasica's theory, the soldier is responsible for her integrity as well. Without the necessity or the capability of turning men into soldiers, the whole state would become corrupt. Sallust placed the beginning of Roman moral decline at the same place, declaring that without threat of war there was a state of confusion, in which there was no longer a clearly articulated system for the pursuit of virtuous actions.⁶ *Fortuna* "grew cruel and confused all matters."⁷ The Romans suffered from taking on an entirely new role, in which they were no longer required to direct their energies towards a clearly defined goal:

Those who had found it easy to bear hardships and dangers, anxiety and adversity, found leisure and wealth, desirable in other circumstances, a burden and a curse.⁸

Moral decline stemmed in part from an inability to adapt from a harsh lifestyle to an easy one, and the uncertainty of the Romans about quite how to conduct that lifestyle opened the door for vice.

This theory shares many similarities with Polybius' account of Roman funerals and the reward system in the army. Those occasions were themed as mediums by which Roman values were disseminated to a wider audience. Deeds done for the good of the state were showcased, honored, and endowed with significance. Polybius demonstrates

⁶ Sallust seems to be the first to choose the destruction of Carthage as a catalyst for Rome's moral decline and perhaps popularized the idea, Earl (1966a), 47; for a discussion of the varied viewpoints of ancient writers on the date of the beginning of moral decline, see Lintott (1972), 626-38.

⁷ Sall. *Cat.* 10.2: saevire fortuna ac miscere omnia coepit.

⁸ Sall. *Cat.* 10.2: Qui labores, pericula, dubias atque asperas res facile toleraverant, iis otium divitiaeque optanda alias, oneri miseriaeque fuere.

that the Romans had a valid and articulated moral framework for the hardships and dangers which attend upon wars.⁹ Sallust refers to the flip side of this, commenting that the Romans had no moral framework to show them how to deal with peace, leisure, and wealth. Once again the military is placed into a prominent position where it underlies the health of the whole state.

Without the background of war which provides the backdrop for exemplary behaviors, and the public display of heroes who help shape a public moral code, there is confusion and the individual becomes morally vulnerable. For Sallust, the subject of his monograph the *Bellum Catilinae* is a prime example of men influenced by corrupt times. Catiline, although he already possessed an “evil and corrupt” nature, had his wrong-doing fostered by the immoral atmosphere in Rome at the time.¹⁰ Sallust explains that two prevalent vices encouraged him:

He was spurred on, also, by the corruption of the public morals, which were being ruined by two great evils of an opposite character, extravagance and avarice [*luxuria atque avaritia*].¹¹

Sallust’s example of Catiline leads him into a discussion of how the vices entered Roman society.¹² He writes, “Hence the lust for money first, then for power, grew upon them; these were, I may say, the root of all evils.”¹³ The introduction of the last vice, *luxuria*,

⁹ See Chapter Two above.

¹⁰ Sall. *Cat.* 6.1: ingenio malo pravoque.

¹¹ Sall. *Cat.* 5.8: Incitabant praeterea corrupti civitatis mores, quos pessuma ac divorsa inter se mala, luxuria atque avaritia, vexabant.

¹² Sall. *Cat.* 10-2.

¹³ Sall. *Cat.* 10.3: primo imperi, deinde pecuniae cupido crevit. Sallust is ambiguous about the exact delineation of the introduction of *avaritia* and *ambitio* as he elsewhere says “at first men’s minds were engaged less by avarice than ambition.” (Sall. *Cat.* 11.1: primo magis ambitio quam avaritia animos hominum exercebat). Earl postulated that the decline in Sallust’s view occurred in three stages, with *ambitio* preceding *avaritia* as a separate stage: Earl (1966a), 13-5. Earl’s analysis was challenged by Conley who argued that there were only two stages, the dominance of *ambitio*, and the dominance of

he blames on Sulla and his army in Asia.¹⁴ The figure of Catiline is a telling transition into this account, and a reflection of Sallust's point that the vices which infected Roman society at this time are dividers, which turn men away from the state and towards personal ambition. Catiline, the man famous for taking arms against the state, is indicative of this new lack of morals.

Personal goals oppose the traditional views of self-sacrifice and subordination of private interest for public interests which we saw promoted as Roman values in Livy and Polybius (Chapters One and Two). Sallust explains how vices corrupt men and turn them from the service of the state and towards personal goals. Firstly, *avaritia*:

Avarice destroyed honor, integrity, and all other noble qualities and taught in their place insolence, cruelty, to neglect the gods, to set a price on everything.¹⁵

In the absence of a goal which unites a community, Roman society suffers an inversion of the relationship between individual and collective. Honor and integrity imply justice towards others, but insolence, cruelty and setting a price on all things indicate the abuse of one's fellows, things which divide the community and cause discord. In addition,

avaritia and *luxuria* at the time of Sulla: Conley (1981), 379-82. Conley suggests that this is also the view of Büchner, although the sentence quoted, "Nach Sulla ist mit der Ehrung der Reichtümer in der letzten Epoche ein Erlahmen der virtus festzustellen" seems insufficient to prove his opinion: Büchner (1982), 230. Büchner accepts that *ambitio* comes chronologically before *avaritia*, in which he is followed by Tiffou (Tiffou [1974], 302-3), but neither elaborates upon the effect of this on Sallust's phases. Conley admits that *avaritia* existed before the time of Sulla, even if he does not believe that it was a dominant feature. Although I accept the opinion of Büchner and Tiffou that the phrase *primo pecuniae deinde imperii cupido crevit* refers to the order of importance rather than time, it seems to me that Sallust links the two so closely as to make the rendering of *avaritia* into the time of Sulla unlikely. I prefer Earl's delineation, which places the rise of *avaritia* sometime before the time of the Gracchi. Certainly for our purposes, it is evident that in the story of Albinus and his army both *avaritia* and *ambitio* are key themes and hence already present in Roman society.

¹⁴ Sall. *Cat.* 11.5-7.

¹⁵ Sall. *Cat.* 10.4: Namque avaritia fidem, probitatem ceterasque artis bonas subvortit; pro his superbiam, crudelitatem, deos neglegere, omnia venalia habere edocuit.

neglect of the gods causes degeneration of the *pax deorum*, the Romans' relationship with the gods, which was something they maintained as a people and as a nation.

The next vice to infiltrate Roman character, *ambitio*, also corrupts relationships and is detrimental to the harmony of the community:

Ambition drove many men to become false; to have one thought locked in the breast, another ready on the tongue; to value friendships and enmities not on their own merits but on the standard of self-interest, and to show a good front rather than a good heart.¹⁶

These two descriptions show us that the Romans have turned in upon themselves, and that efforts once directed at securing a community good when the state was united in adversity, have degenerated into treating one another with injustice and deceit. The Romans begin to dissimulate, their personal relationships become less honest and, we are led to believe, less strong than before.

The stories of Cincinnatus and Horatius Cocles are a good point of comparison to Sallust's theory. When Cincinnatus complained about his duty but did it anyway, he subordinated his personal concerns and interests to that of the state. Horatius Cocles, by his self-sacrificing, made the same contribution, in some versions losing an eye, in Polybius', losing his life. In both stories, the context for heroism is war and the threat of loss and destruction to the state. In Sallust's account, there simply is not anything that measures up to war for inducing men to self-sacrifice. Without it, individuals are no longer grounded in concern for the collective and public good. In Sallust's view, Rome needs war, and she needs her citizens to be soldiers.

¹⁶ Sall. *Cat.* 10.5: *Ambitio multos mortalis falsos fieri subegit, aliud clausum in pectore, aliud in lingua promptum habere, amicitias inimicitiasque non ex re, sed ex commodo aestumare magisque voltum quam ingenium bonum habere.*

In Sallust's work, the effects of the removal of *metus hostilis* are written onto the soldiers, who reflect and manifest the vices of Roman society. Just as in Polybius, where the good morals of the Roman state are self-perpetuated and exemplified in Cocles and in the army, Sallust uses soldiers to showcase the bad elements of Roman society. To summarize, we enumerated the effects of the introduction of vice given by Sallust as: confusion, manifesting in the lack of a clear articulation of virtuous behavior; the introduction of *avaritia*, *ambitio*, and *luxuria*, leading to disunity and a lack of concord among the Romans; and mistreatment of the allies. Sallust shows us these traits manifesting themselves in the armies commanded by Sp. Postumus Albinus and his brother Aulus, where the soldiers become embodiments of these behaviors.

III. The Soldier as Illustration of Moral Decline

Sallust intends the reader to associate the army of Sp. Postumus Albinus, in action in Africa in 110 B.C., with his ideas about Rome's moral decline. He lays out his views about decline most clearly in the *Bellum Catilinae*, discussed above, but he inserts a reiteration of the vices of *ambitio* and *avaritia* in the middle of his account of Albinus' army. It intervenes between the story of the army's service under Albinus and his brother Aulus in *Bellum Jugurthinum*, and in another section Metellus' arrival in Africa and his assessment of the condition of the army which he finds there.¹⁷ This passage explains how the *metus hostilis* had preserved the morals of the state, and without them, the minds of the people were turned to wantonness and arrogance. Eventually desire for power and

¹⁷ Albinus and Aulus: Sall. *Iug.* 36-9; Metellus: Sall. *Iug.* 43-5.

greed arose, too. The passage gives a parallel but less detailed account of Sallust's vision of how the decline happened.¹⁸

The commanders Albinus and Aulus display the twin vices of *ambitio* and *avaritia* in several of their actions in Africa. In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust indicated that one of the major effects of these vices was that it caused the individual to mistreat others, and each of the decisions that the two make out of ambition and greed have a negative effect on others around them. The first of these decisions is made by Albinus, who wishes to return to Rome in order to stand for election, and attempts to hasten the end of the war in order to do so. According to Sallust, he is careless about how this end is achieved: "He himself set out at once, desiring by arms, by surrender, or any possible way to bring the war to an end before the elections."¹⁹ The mention of surrender is particularly striking, implying as it does that Albinus has little regard for either his own soldiers or Rome's interests and reputation. One major negative effect follows hard on the heels of this policy. Jugurtha immediately begins to thwart Albinus' designs by delaying the course of the war, forcing Albinus to depart for Rome and leave his troops in the hands of his brother, who turns out to be equally ambitious, but sadly incompetent.²⁰

If Albinus had displayed only *ambitio*, his brother Aulus is guilty of both *ambitio* and *avaritia*. He quickly shows that he has no more concern for the troops than his brother, but instead wishes to use them to satisfy either greed or ambition, "inspired with the hope of either finishing the war or forcing a bribe from the king through fear of his

¹⁸ Sall. *Iug.* 41. Compare Sall. *Cat.* 10-12, discussed above. I refer to passage 41 in more detail below.

¹⁹ Sall. *Iug.* 36.1: ac statim ipse profectus, uti ante comitia, quod tempus haud longe aberat, armis aut deditione aut quouis modo bellum conficeret.

²⁰ Sall. *Iug.* 36.2-3.

army.”²¹ In order to accomplish this goal, Aulus disregards his responsibilities towards his troops and begins to treat them abusively:

He therefore summoned his soldiers in the month of January from their winter quarters for active duty in the field, and making forced marches in spite of the severity of the winter season, reached the town of Suthul, where the King’s treasure was kept.²²

Aulus’ task had presumably been, since it was winter, simply to oversee the army in Africa until either his brother or the next commander should return to take charge of it. Instead, he ordered the troops to fight, even though it was not campaigning season, exposing the troops to risk from the weather and the unnecessary battle. We have already seen (Chapter One) that causing the deaths of Roman soldiers could draw censure, and that troops were not considered to be a disposable commodity. Moreover, the opinion that a commander’s care should be for his troops rather than his own ambitions is given to us expressly by Caesar. When his troops at Alesia clamored for the signal for battle at a time he did not deem favorable, Caesar told them how much he valued their lives:

When he saw them resolved to refuse no risk that might bring him renown, he deserved to be condemned for the uttermost injustice if he did not count their lives dearer than his own welfare.²³

Aulus, on the other hand, disregards the idea that he ought to be responsible for his troops’ welfare. His actions are certainly unjust and a symptom of the vice of *ambitio*.

²¹ Sall. *Iug.* 37.3: in spem adductus Aulus... aut conficiendi belli aut terrore exercitus ab rege pecuniae capiendae.

²² Sall. *Iug.* 37.3-4: milites mense Ianuario ex hibernis in expeditionem euocat, magnisque itineribus hieme aspera pervenit ad oppidum Suthul, ubi regis thesauri erant.

²³ Caes. *B. Gall.* 7.19: quos cum sic animo paratos videat, ut nullum pro sua laude periculum recusent, summae se iniquitatis condemnari debere, nisi eorum vitam sua salute habeat cariorum. Cf. *B. Civ* 1.72.

As Sallust indicated in his description of this vice, it causes an individual to act in his own interests, become abusive, and reject the traditional values of the selfless soldier.

Aulus, like his brother, has no regard for the reputation and good of Rome. He had already displayed *avaritia* by hoping for a bribe from Jugurtha, or to capture Suthul and the King's treasure. His ambition and greed leads him, and his army, into a trap. Jugurtha leads him away from Suthul, pretending retreat and holding out hope that a bargain could be struck in a remote location, "thus, he suggested, any misconduct of the Roman's [Aulus] would be less obvious."²⁴ It need hardly be remarked that entering into secret agreements with Rome's enemies was reprehensible conduct. As sordid as Sallust paints the commander Aulus, his troops are no better, and we can suggest it is Aulus himself who is responsible. Just as *avaritia* and *ambitio* were vices introduced into society under Sallust's schema, Albinus and Aulus introduce these vices into the army. Aulus had privileged his own ambitions and greed over the welfare of his troops. The troops return this mistreatment in kind, for Jugurtha finds them susceptible to bribery.²⁵ Just as in Sallust's view of society, where once honor, integrity, and fear of the enemy would have united the community, with greed and ambition at large, the army has turned into a collection of individuals each acting in his own self interest. When Jugurtha ambushes the Roman camp, the Romans react with a hopeless fragmentation of different actions which reflects a community unable to co-operate:

The Roman soldiers were alarmed by the unusual disturbance; some seized their arms, others hid themselves, a part encouraged the fearful; consternation reigned. The hostile force was large, night and clouds

²⁴ Sall. *Iug.* 38.3: ita delicta occultiora fore. He means that if Aulus struck a dishonorable bargain, it would be less likely to be noticed by the senate at Rome.

²⁵ Sall. *Iug.* 38.3.

darkened the heavens, there was danger whichever course they took: in short, whether it was safer to stand or flee was uncertain. Then from the number of those who had been bribed, as I just said, one cohort of Ligurians with two squadrons of Thracians and a few privates went over to the king, while the chief centurion of the Third legion gave the enemy an opportunity of entering the part of the fortification which he had been appointed to guard, and there all the Numidians burst in. Our men in shameful flight, in most cases throwing away their arms, took refuge on a neighboring hill.²⁶

Sallust had argued that the true import of the fall of Carthage was that it left the Romans directionless, and that when virtues were no longer clearly articulated, each man turned towards his own interests. The description of the battle with Jugurtha above shows the soldiery manifesting the effects of this confusion. Without internal concord and an idea of how best to react to the threat, the soldiers scatter to separate tasks. Some do the right thing- seizing their arms for the fight or encouraging others. These good soldiers, however, are betrayed by their fellows. The *primus pilus* of the third legion had been bribed and allowed the Numidian forces entry to the camp, another clear example of *avaritia* leading to mistreatment and betrayal of one's fellows. In the end, a lack of unity condemns even the soldiers who know the correct course of action, and in the light of the next day, the army is forced under the yoke by Jugurtha.²⁷

²⁶ Sall. *Iug.* 38.5-7: milites Romani, perculsi tumultu insolito, arma capere alii, alii se abdere, pars territos confirmare, trepidare omnibus locis. vis magna hostium, caelum nocte atque nubibus obscuratum, periculum anceps; postremo fugere an manere tutius foret, in incerto erat. Sed ex eo numero, quos paulo ante corruptos diximus, cohors una Ligurum cum duabus turmis Thracum et paucis gregariis militibus transiit ad regem, et centurio primi pili tertiae legionis per munitionem, quam uti defenderet acceperat, locum hostibus introeundi dedit, eaque Numidae cuncti irrupere. Nostri foeda fuga, plerique abiectis armis, proximum collem occupaverunt.

²⁷ Sall. *Iug.* 38.9.

This discord among the soldiery is part of a theme of disunity which runs through the *Bellum Jugurthinum*. The strife between Jugurtha and his brothers began the war.²⁸ Later in the text, Sallust digresses to tell us the story of the fraternal rivalry of the Philaeni, two Carthaginians who overcame their disputes to act in concord for the sake of their country, and Sallust will return to this theme in the strife between Metellus and Marius, and Marius and Sulla.²⁹ This lack of co-operation is manifest between the brothers Albinus and Aulus. Aulus had acted in competition with his brother when he attempted to finish the war, and when he led the troops to disaster, Albinus refuses to cooperate with his brother when he declines to recognize the resulting treaty.³⁰ Albinus, instead, attempts to return to the army and renew the war, but it is too late. The troops have already become utterly inoperative:

But although Albinus on his arrival was eager to pursue Jugurtha and atone for his brother's disgrace, yet knowing his soldiers, who were demoralized not only by their rout but by the license and debauchery consequent upon lax discipline, he decided that he was in no condition to make any move.³¹

Affairs have deteriorated into such a state that the whole army has been rendered impotent, and we see that the death of military efficiency has followed swiftly upon the heels of disunity. In Sallust's sequence, *luxuria* entered society after *ambitio* and *avaritia*. The same is the case here. In the schema, it was the absence of *metus hostilis* which resulted in men, who at one point had had clear direction for their efforts, falling to

²⁸ Sall. *Iug.* 11-6: 20-6.

²⁹ Wiedemann (1993), 48-57. The Philaeni, Sall. *Iug.* 79.

³⁰ Sall. *Iug.* 37.3: 39.2.

³¹ Sall. *Iug.* 39.5: Postquam eo venit, quamquam persequi Iugurtham et mederi fraternae invidiae animo ardebat, cognitis militibus, quos praeter fugam soluto imperio licentia atque lascivia corruperat, ex copia rerum statuit sibi nihil agitandum.

looking after their own interests. Aulus' thwarted ambitions had led to first his mistreatment of the army, and then the defeat of that army because of his and their greed, and because it no longer had a spirit of unity. This lax discipline is another facet of Aulus' selfishness. Aulus for Sallust embodied *avaritia* and *ambitio*, characteristics which prevented men from doing right by their fellows. Aulus, it seems, had simply abandoned the soldiers to do whatever they pleased, no longer opposing them to the enemy, and, without an enemy, we see the effects of the absence of *metus hostilis* in a microcosm of the rest of society.

It is worth returning to Sallust's discussion of moral decline when we examine the soldiers themselves more closely.³² Sallust's editorial commentary upon the general state of affairs in Rome after the destruction of Carthage goes hand in hand with his account of the soldiers, who, when they are non-combatant, are barely even civilized. The moralizing digression on the ills of Roman society as a whole both reminds us of the schema that Sallust outlined in the *Bellum Catilinae*, and serves to reframe the account of the soldiers by setting it in direct dialogue with the themes of Roman societal decline which are already so evident in the story. The digression begins with events back at Rome and an apparent attempt to right a wrong. Chapter 40 deals with the tribune of the plebs Mamilius Limetanus' proposal to prosecute anyone who had collaborated with Jugurtha. This caused some strife in Rome and those who opposed the bill did so secretly, stirring up the allies in their cause.³³ The bill was passed, according to Sallust,

³² Sall. *Iug.* 40-2.

³³ Sall. *Iug.* 40.3. The bill is referred to as a *rogatio*, the proposition of either a *lex* or a *plebiscitum*.

from hatred of the nobility, and the investigation began with harshness and violence.³⁴

The introduction of parties and factions, Sallust tells us, is another symptom of the lack of morals resulting from the destruction of Carthage. Sallust's description of this world is essentially a repetition of his words in the *Bellum Catilinae*. He explains how the removal of threats to the state destroyed the previous good morals, and that peace was a curse. Describing the general atmosphere after 146 B.C., he writes:

For the nobles began to abuse their position and the people their liberty, and every man for himself robbed, pillaged, and plundered. Thus the community was split into two parties, and between these the state was torn to pieces.³⁵

The first of these indicators of decline we have already seen in the army in Africa.

Sallust says the nobles abuse their position, and both Albinus and Aulus disregarded the interests of the soldiers. Albinus abandoned it twice, once to stand for election, leaving it in the hands of his incompetent brother, and then once more when he returned to find it in lax order and did nothing to remedy the situation.³⁶ Aulus used the army as a tool for his own ambition and greed when he moved it out of its winter quarters. The idea of the “community split in two” also fits the pattern of the story of this particular army. When Aulus mistreated his troops, his soldiers returned the favor by abandoning him and their own fellows to Jugurtha by taking bribes. This mutual abuse of their relationship reveals the tension between the noble Aulus and his common troops.

³⁴ Sall. *Iug.* 40.5.

³⁵ Sall. *Iug.* 41.5: Namque coepere nobilitas dignitatem, populus libertatem in libidinem vertere, sibi quisque ducere trahere rapere. Ita omnia in duas partis abstracta sunt, res publica, quae media fuerat, dilacerata.

³⁶ Sall. *Iug.* 39.5.

The worst, however, is yet to come, for we have not seen the extent of the degeneration of Albinus' army. The true effects of Sallust's schema of vices introduced to the community are revealed in his account of the army as Metellus finds it. Given fresh liberty, or, unopposed to any foe, Sallust tells us the people abused their liberty, as the soldiers do. When Sallust mentions the state "torn to pieces", this is also a reflection of the total breakdown of community in the army, where there is no longer any sense of civilized cooperation, and the soldiers' society has degenerated back to nomadic lawlessness. Sallust explains the situation as follows:

But when Metellus reached Africa, the proconsul Spurius Albinus handed over to him an army that was weak, cowardly, and incapable of facing either danger or hardship, readier of tongue than of hand, a plunderer of our allies and itself a prey to the enemy, subject to no discipline or restraint.³⁷

Being ready and able to face danger and hardship is a virtue which was indicative of the earlier, idealized society before the sack of Carthage. The soldiers are now displaying a microcosm of contemporary society's behavior. Faced with no enemy, the army has become soft and corrupt. Worse, they have manifested another one of Nasica's predictions, and have begun to turn on their own allies. Sallust goes on to explain what has happened to their community, and how they have even begun to lose their marks of civilization:

But his [Albinus'] camps were not fortified, nor was watch kept in military fashion; men absented themselves from duty whenever they pleased. Camp followers and soldiers ranged about in company day and night, and in their forays laid waste the country, stormed

³⁷ Sall. *Iug.* 44.1: Sed ubi in Africam venit, exercitus [ei] traditus a Sp. Albino proconsule iners inbellis, neque periculi neque laboris patiens, lingua quam manu promptior, praedator ex sociis et ipse praeda hostium, sine imperio et modestia habitus.

farmhouses, and vied with one another in amassing booty in the form of cattle and slaves, which they bartered with the traders for foreign wine and other luxuries. They even sold the grain which was allotted them by the state and bought bread from day to day. In short, whatever disgraceful excesses resulting from idleness and wantonness can be mentioned or imagined were all to be found in that army and others besides.³⁸

As Wiedemann points out, this description of the soldiers wandering carelessly around the countryside bears a striking resemblance to Sallust's digression regarding the Gaetulians in Africa.³⁹ These sections come after the division of Numidia between Jugurtha and Adherbal, and since he is describing which portions fell to which prince Sallust addends an account of the geography and nations of Africa.⁴⁰ The first inhabitants, he writes, were the Libyans and Gaetulians, who were "rude and uncivilized."⁴¹ They are also lawless and nomadic:

They were governed neither by institutions nor law, nor were they subject to anyone's rule. A restless, roving people, they had their abodes wherever night compelled a halt.⁴²

The state of being nomadic was traditionally the hallmark of men who were considered to be little better than animals.⁴³ The soldiers, similarly, are being held to no rule, law or duty in the camp, and they wander wherever they please across the countryside,

³⁸ Sall. *Iug.* 44.5: Sed neque muniebatur, neque more militari vigiliae deducebantur; uti cuique libebat, ab signis aberat; lixae permixti cum militibus diu noctuque uagabantur, et palantes agros vastare, villas expugnare, pecoris et mancipiorum praedas certantes agere eaque mutare cum mercatoribus vino aduecticio et aliis talibus; praeterea frumentum publice datum vendere, panem in dies mercari; postremo quaecumque dici aut fingi queunt ignaviae luxuriaequae probra, ea in illo exercitu cuncta fuere et alia amplius.

³⁹ Wiedemann (1993), 54.

⁴⁰ Sall. *Iug.* 17-8.

⁴¹ Sall. *Iug.* 18.1: asperi incultique.

⁴² Sall. *Iug.* 18.2: Ei neque moribus neque lege aut imperio cuiusquam regebantur; vagi, palantes, quas nox coegerat sedes habebant.

⁴³ Wiedemann (1993), 53; Wiedemann (1986), 189-202.

competing with one another for whatever booty they can loot instead of cooperating. The soldiers have become not only militarily inefficient, but barely resemble a society.

The idea that operating outside the rules and bounds of the state makes one the equivalent of an animal occurs also in the *Bellum Catilinae*. The soldiers of Catiline were not just outside of the state's boundaries, but they had actively gone against the state and taken up arms against it. In his exhortation to the troops before the final battle, Catiline warns them, "Do not be captured and slaughtered like cattle, but, fighting like heroes [*virorum*], leave the enemy a bloody and tearful victory."⁴⁴ The word that Catiline uses here, *vir*, can mean equally man or hero, and in either sense it opposes a shameful state of being to one with positive meaning. Catiline's troops, fighting against the state, are also fighting for legitimacy. They are fighting not to die like the beasts which standing outside the civilized state would make them. Albinus' troops are similarly losing their hallmarks of participation in civilized society. Their lack of cooperation, their disordered wanderings, and even the fact that they sell the grain that the state distributes for their use, all contribute to the picture of these soldiers as having rejected the Roman state and preferred life outside of it. It is useful to recall Livy's account of the *legiones Cannenses*, who as soldiers who had ceased to perform were abandoned to their Carthaginian captors and denied re-entry into Roman society. These ideas make loud and definite declarations about Roman society- if one is not martial, one is not really Roman.

IV. The Dissolution of Virtues, Confusion, and Disunity

⁴⁴ Sall. *Cat.* 58.21: cavete [inulti animam amittatis], neu capiti potius sicuti pecora trucidemini quam virorum more pugnantes cruentam atque luctuosam victoriam hostibus relinquatis.

For Sallust it is vital that the soldier be exposed to definitely articulated ideas about virtue.⁴⁵ His treatment of Rome in this period shows that as a symptom of moral decline, the traditional Roman set of virtues is no longer being fully comprehended as a cohesive unity. We saw this aspect of Rome's decline mentioned in the *Bellum Catilinae* when Sallust says, "Those who had found it easy to bear hardships and dangers, anxiety and adversity, found leisure and wealth, desirable in other circumstances, a burden and a curse."⁴⁶ The Romans who were brave and honorable, for Sallust, are the same Romans who manifest vices. Vice sneaks into Roman society when its people become directionless, or, in other words, when the way to virtue is not clearly articulated. We saw the effects of this confusion in the army in Africa under Aulus, when the soldiers were unable to co-operate and show a unified front, and even those who attempted to do the right thing were undermined by the vices of their fellows. This incident is part of a broader and more sinister pattern in which the soldiers, like society's leaders, no longer truly understand what it means to be Roman.

Although Sallust in his battle descriptions separates out brave and cowardly soldiers, he also shows the futility of the soldier's virtue in an environment where that virtue is not shared. The idea that moral degeneration stemmed from the removal of the Carthaginian threat already indicated that military readiness is integral to the state, and hence the citizen as soldier was something very important. Sallust goes on to show us

⁴⁵ I use the English word "virtue" in this section in preference to the Latin *virtus*, because Sallust refers to a wider range of meanings than the primarily military based word *virtus*. By virtue I refer to "doing the right thing", or the set of actions which are good, correct and appropriate.

⁴⁶ Sall. *Cat.* 10.2: Qui labores, pericula, dubias atque asperas res facile toleraverant, iis otium divitiaeque optanda alias, oneri miseriaeque fuere.

that one of the major signs that the whole state has become morally degenerate is when the soldier's virtue, and the soldier himself, has become meaningless. In order to elucidate this point, I will compare Sallust's exposition of the moral theory before setting this in dialogue with the description of the condition and actions of the soldiers. In this case, the exposition of Sallust's ideas about the fragmentation and confusion of virtue occurs in the debate and *synkrisis* of Cato and Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae* over the punishment of the Catilinarian conspirators.⁴⁷

For Sallust, the idea of virtue has not simply declined or faded under the influence of the rise of *ambitio* and *avaritia*, it has splintered, and, ultimately, it has turned upon itself. The main exposition of the condition of virtue in the Republic occurs in the debate between Caesar and the younger Cato in the *Bellum Catilinae*, regarding the fate of the captured conspirators. The picture of splintered virtues can be found in the opposing positions of Caesar and Cato, who both represent a different aspect of virtuous behavior, and the following *synkrisis* in which Sallust juxtaposes and compares their respective versions of virtue. During the debate, the first speaker in the senate was the consul elect, Decimus Junius Silanus, who recommended that the conspirators be put to death.⁴⁸ When it came to be Caesar's turn to speak he opposed Silanus' opinion.⁴⁹ During his career, and especially during the civil wars, Caesar had made the virtue of *clementia* a particular part of his image.⁵⁰ In his contribution here, he advocated showing mercy to the conspirators, and suggested that instead of being executed, their possessions be

⁴⁷ Sall. *Cat.* 50-5.

⁴⁸ Sall. *Cat.* 49.5.

⁴⁹ Sall. *Cat.* 50-1.

⁵⁰ This link between Caesar and *clementia* is surely Sallust imposing Caesar's later image on his earlier self.

confiscated and they themselves imprisoned in one of the allied towns, with the stipulation that their case could never be brought again.⁵¹

Cato, on the other hand, was, as his grandfather had been, an embodiment of old-time austerity and adherence to strict standards. In his speech, he directly addressed the theme of the incoherence of virtue. In arguing that generosity and clemency is simply another way of handing Rome over to her enemies, he lamented, “We have long since lost the true names for things.”⁵² Cato tried to ally himself with the former days, in which the path to virtue was clearly defined, and the words for concepts expressed them truly. Such is no longer the case, and Cato’s desire to have the conspirators executed is a means of trying to recapture that lost era. Syme has suggested that both Cato and Caesar exhibit virtue during the debate, and that their complementary qualities in alliance with one another were what was necessary to save the Republic.⁵³ In the following *synkrisis*, Sallust certainly seems to see no wrong in the character of either man:

In birth then, in years and in eloquence, they were about equal; in greatness of soul they were evenly matched, and likewise in renown, although the renown of each was different. Caesar was held great because of his benefactions and lavish generosity, Cato for the uprightness of his life. The former became famous for his gentleness and compassion, the austerity of the latter had brought him prestige. Caesar gained glory by giving, helping, and forgiving; Cato by never stooping to bribery. One was a refuge for the unfortunate, the other a scourge for the wicked. The good nature of the one was applauded, the steadfastness of the other.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Sall. *Cat.* 51.43.

⁵² Sall. *Cat.* 52.11: *Iam pridem equidem nos vera vocabula rerum amisimus.*

⁵³ Syme (1964), 120.

⁵⁴ Sall. *Cat.* 54.1-3: *Igitur iis genus, aetas, eloquentia prope aequalia fuere, magnitudo animi par, item gloria, sed alia alii. Caesar beneficiis ac munificentia magnus habebatur, integritate vitae Cato. Ille mansuetudine et misericordia clarus factus, huic severitas dignitatem addiderat. Caesar dando, sublevando, ignoscendo, Cato nihil largiundo gloriam adeptus est. In altero miseris perfugium erat, in altero malis perniciēs. Illius facilitas, huius constantia laudabatur.*

The comparison of these various virtues, as they appear in each man, has the effect of highlighting the fact that neither has both sets of virtues. If Cato is austere, then we know that Caesar is not; Caesar's generosity underlines that Cato lacks this virtue. Batstone, in seeking to build upon Syme's analysis that together Cato and Caesar had the qualities the Republic needed, argues that in the *synkrisis* we see a fragmentation of various traditional virtues and the failure of Roman society to come to terms with this separation. *Synkrisis* is by nature antagonistic, and in Cato and Caesar we see the elements of virtue separated and pitched against one another, and society unable to articulate reconciliation.⁵⁵ Levene has demonstrated that this fragmentation can be understood in dialogue with Sallust's relationship to the Elder Cato. Sallust is demonstrably an admirer and imitator of the elder Cato, whose agitation in the senate was primarily responsible for the undertaking of the third Punic war and the fate of Carthage which, according to Sallust, proved so disastrous for Roman morals. In Levene's view, the younger Cato represents Catonian rigour, and the figure of Caesar is representative of Catonian mercy. The problems of virtue in the later Republic thus parallel the problems inherent in the application of Catonian rigour towards Carthage, in which the resultant decline in morals at Rome ultimately means that Cato's virtue destroys the very society which it defined.⁵⁶

These analyses of the *synkrisis* help us to better understand the fate of Sallust's soldier figure by setting them in dialogue with the figure of the soldier. If Caesar and Cato represent virtues split and set against each other, this will help us to elucidate why the soldier himself suffers so much from a lack of consensus and unity. Sallust shows us

⁵⁵ Batstone (1988), 1-29.

⁵⁶ Levene (2000), 170-91.

that virtue is not simply something one displays, it also has to be articulated and understood, and that understanding depends on consensus. When virtue is splintered and fragmented, it is self-defeating, and ultimately meaningless. This principle holds true in regard to Sallust's soldiers, who reflect the problems of the articulation of virtue which we saw in the *Bellum Catilinae*. When *virtus* is inconsistent, that is, held by some soldiers and not others, it is shown to be redundant. Polybius has insisted that the strength of the Roman state was that virtue was articulated and shared among the members of the community. When in Sallust the soldiers are inconsistent in their actions, this lack of unity renders both virtue and the virtuous soldier meaningless.

Sallust considers it inevitable that in every army there will be brave men and cowardly ones. Describing the joyous reunion of two divisions of Metellus' army, who had successfully fought two separate skirmishes with the Numidians under Jugurtha and his lieutenant Bomilcar, Sallust records their boasts to one another and remarks in a small editorial, "For so it is with human affairs; in time of victory the very cowards may brag, while defeat discredits even the brave."⁵⁷ That every army should contain brave men and cowards is something he takes for granted. If diversity exists in the quality of the soldiers, then this diversity manifests itself in the manner in which each soldier behaves in battle conditions. Fractionalization of the activities of the army is common in Sallust's battle descriptions.⁵⁸ There is little consistency in Sallust's soldiers, and at every turn Sallust emphasizes the hopeless diversity of the actions that they perform and the kind of spirit that they display. A striking, and typical, example of this occurs in Sallust's

⁵⁷ Sall. *Iug.* 53.8: Quippe res humanae ita sese habent: in victoria vel ignavis gloriari licet, aduersae res etiam bonos detrectant. We see this principle in practice at 57.6 and 67.2.

⁵⁸ See Sall. *Iug.* 57.4; 58.2; 92.9.

description of Jugurtha's surprise attack on the Romans under Marius as they are retiring into winter quarters:

Some took arms, while others kept off the enemy from their comrades who were arming; a part mounted their horses and charged the foe.... Without standards and in disorder horse and foot massed together, some gave ground, others slew their opponents; many were bravely fighting against a foe who were superior in numbers and attacked from the rear.⁵⁹

At first, these diverse actions are complementary. The soldiers co-operate in an attempt to have everyone arm in safety, but their efforts in the battle line are splintered and cause problems. The men are not all having equal success in all places, all is disorder and confusion, and those who are bravely fighting are not successful because of their virtue, but in fact led into greater danger because they become open to attack in the rear. Being possessed of *virtus* is not of much advantage to the soldiers, either in this situation or in many others which Sallust shows us. Time and again Sallust shows us the futility of the condition of the brave soldier, who is no better off than his cowardly counterpart, and at times even more unfortunate. There is a useful illustration of this point in an incident which occurs in the army under Marius. Marius, like Aulus before him, attempts to go after the king's treasure, and he pitches his forces against the fortress in which Jugurtha is hiding it. The action already smacks of *avaritia* on Marius' part, and the following description of the battle indicates both that Marius is doing wrong by his soldiers, and that in such an environment, the soldier's virtue is futile:

⁵⁹ Sall. *Iug.* 97.5: aut arma capiebant aut capientis alios ab hostibus defensabant; pars equos escendere, obviam ire hostibus... Sine signis, sine ordinibus equites peditesque permixti cedere alii, alii [MSS alios, alios, alii, alli Ahlberg, Sallust, Leipzig, 1919] obtruncari, multi [multa occurs in two MSS, A1 and N, multos the other MSS, multi Dietsch, Leipzig, 1859] contra aduersos acerrime pugnantes ab tergo circumveniri.

The soldiers could not keep their footing before the works because of the steepness of the hill nor operate within the mantlets without peril; the best of them were killed or wounded, and the rest gradually lost courage.⁶⁰

The one brave soldier's virtue has become meaningless and irrelevant, and only serves to have him killed more swiftly than his lesser counterpart. In the question of the destruction of Carthage, Cato wished to practice ancestral austerity and strictness upon Rome's enemies. He was not motivated by greed or ambition, but it was virtue that led him to agitate for Carthage's destruction. On that occasion, the application of virtue, ironically, only resulted in its own destruction. The same is the case here for the brave soldiers who are cut down. Virtue is shown to be futile and irrelevant, and the brave soldier meaningless. Nor is this the only example of this futility. When the soldiers are set upon by the people in the town of Vaga, Sallust's description of the pitiful fate of the troops is indicative of the hollowness of the figure of the brave soldier, "side by side, valiant and cowardly, strong and weak, fell without striking a blow."⁶¹ Sallust separates them, labeling one group of soldiers brave, the others cowardly, only to highlight how redundant the distinction has become. Similarly during the siege of Zama, some soldiers advance while others hold back, but the range of the missile weapons is such that both types of soldier are wounded; Sallust remarks, "Thus the valiant and the craven were in like danger but of unlike repute."⁶²

⁶⁰ Sall. *Iug.* 92.9: milites neque pro opere consistere propter iniquitatem loci neque inter vineas sine periculo administrare: optimus quisque cadere aut sauciari, ceteris metus augeri.

⁶¹ Sall. *Iug.* 67.2: iuxta boni malique, strenui et inbelles inulti obtruncari.

⁶² Sall. *Iug.* 57.6: parique periculo, sed fama impari boni atque ignavi erant.

The only way for virtue to prevail, and the soldier to retain his meaning, is for there to be a clearly articulated concept of that virtue which is shared by all. This kind of understanding is now only found in isolated pockets of soldiers. In the battle of the Roman camp near Zama, one group of soldiers, upon being divided from the rest of the army, is able to maintain an internal unity. While the other soldiers scattered and fighters and fliers alike were cut down, Sallust tells us how these soldiers managed to be more successful:

Out of the entire number forty or less remembered that they were Romans. These gathered together and took a position a little higher than the rest, from which they could not be dislodged by the greatest efforts of the enemy.⁶³

This incident is a good illustration of Sallust's idea of what the figure of the soldier represents. The soldiers are successful because they share an understanding of what it means to be Roman. When a society is able to articulate a concept of virtue and form a clear idea of what it means, they can return to unity and efficiency. Sallust's Roman society is demonstrated, once again, through the figure of the soldier, who acts out the abstract concepts of political philosophy that we saw in the debate of Cato and Caesar.

The figure of Cato, whom Sallust admired so much, becomes a tragic hero when held up in comparison to the experience of the soldiers in the *Bellum Jugurthinum*. Cato, like the soldiers who fight bravely only to discover that their more cowardly fellows have allowed the enemy to move to their rear, assumes that everyone is as virtuous as he. Cato's actions in advocating the destruction of Carthage are not

⁶³ Sall. *Jug.* 58.3: Ceterum ex omni multitudine non amplius quadraginta memores nominis Romani grege facto locum cepere paulo quam alii editiorem, neque inde maxima vi depelli quiverunt...

inherently flawed, but quite the opposite, as they only reflect the traditional virtue of austerity. Like the soldiers, Cato forges ahead in the pursuit of virtue, failing to realize that his fellows, in this case, the other members of Roman society, will let him down. It is consensus and uniformity that are the first essential elements lost; individual members of Roman society allowing vice to creep into society and breaking down the integrity of the system.

IV. Conclusion

Hock wrote that, for Sallust, “history was linked with *virtus*, the presence or absence of which determined the health or sickness, the success or failure of a society or an individual.”⁶⁴ It is primarily the problem of virtue, its articulation, its fragmentation, which plays the central role in Sallust’s vision of Roman society in decline. For Sallust, the irrelevance of virtue can be expressed by means of the irrelevance of the virtuous soldier. When Roman society breaks down and becomes corrupt, it is the figure of the soldier on whom this reality can be painted most vividly. Our signal that something is dreadfully wrong in Sallust’s text is that Rome’s greatest strength, the brave soldier, has become meaningless.

In Rome, it was war and the military that provided the framework in which virtues could find their clearest articulation, and by means of war that Rome found her best examples of virtue: Cocles, Cincinnatus, Cloelia, and Scaevola, all inheritors of the tradition of Marcus Curtius in which war and the soldier defined the character of the

⁶⁴ Hock (1988), 13-24.

Roman nation. Polybius showed us this picture in ascendancy, where Roman society disseminated the stories of martial heroes in public contexts and presented a clear view of what virtue meant. In Livy, failure to display these martial virtues and characteristics led to social exclusion and abandonment, in which Roman society did not tolerate its non soldiering or non martial members. For Sallust, too, soldiering is inextricably linked to civilization, and without the military to act as a guide, the integrity of the Roman state crumbles. The soldier bought Rome's eternity and founded her success, and without him, when there is no more war, Rome can only decline.

Chapter Five

Information and Communication: The Caesarian Corpus

I. Introduction

In our examination of the Caesarian corpus, the investigation of the figure of the soldier takes an important new direction. The texts which make up the Caesarian corpus were written by soldiers themselves, providing an internal viewpoint and an immediacy which draws us closer to the soldier's real experience.¹ These texts will serve to show that the soldier describing himself and the action around him is a far different man from the soldier whom we have seen written into history.

The previous chapters have examined how the soldier figure is used as a vehicle for explaining the course of Roman history. The authors discussed in these chapters have constructed an idea of the historical soldier in dialogue with their views of social progression and decline, and assigned the soldier an important role because of what he achieves through physical acts. In Polybius, the willing soldier was the product of the Roman national character on which her success was built. In Livy, the soldier had to physically continue performing soldierly acts to retain his identity as a soldier and maintain legitimacy in that role, and for Sallust, the soldier who had ceased to soldier was indicative of the moral decline of society. Aemilius Paulus' bald declaration that the soldier need only worry about his physical fitness, the readiness of his arms and his

¹ In talking of the soldier-author I wish to make a distinction between low-ranking soldier and commander or high ranking officer: Polybius, Sallust, and Cato were all military men, but their experiences would have differed completely from that of the ordinary foot-soldier.

readiness to march, was indicative of this view of the soldier as a physical being.² In his assessment, the soldier is an instrument for the use of his general, who ought to be able to be turned in any direction or against any foe. Aemilius' words remind us of the aristocratic conceit prevalent in the Republic that members of the upper classes were naturally qualified to serve the state as a magistrate or as a general.³ In declaring his social and intellectual superiority, Aemilius claims the right to unquestioned obedience from his troops.

The *corpus Caesarianum* reveals a discrepancy between what is the ideal for Aemilius –the soldier who acts but does not think— and the soldier's condition in practice. In this body of texts, the commentaries by Caesar himself of the Gallic and civil wars, and the pseudo-Caesarian accounts of the African, Alexandrian and Spanish wars, we encounter the presence of the cerebral soldier. In this chapter I therefore approach the Roman soldier with the aim of gaining an understanding of how he interprets his own experience as a soldier. In order to do this, I discuss the *Bellum Hispaniense*, the work of a lower ranking officer or perhaps centurion, and use key passages that have been identified as strange or incongruous in a military commentary to elucidate his real interests and concerns.⁴ I argue that the text is impressionistic in nature rather than analytical, and that the author shows an almost obsessive interest in gathering information. When this is placed in dialogue with other incidents from the rest of the *corpus Caesarianum*, it becomes apparent that the flow of information is a key

² Livy 44.34: militem haec tria curare debere, corpus ut quam ualidissimum et perniciosissimum habeat, arma apta, cibum paratum ad subita imperia; cetera scire de se dis immortalibus et imperatori suo curae esse. in quo exercitu milites consultant, imperator rumoribus uulgi circumagatur, ibi nihil salutare esse.

³ Phang (2008), 13-20; On the use of military manuals, see Campbell (1987), 13-29.

⁴ On the question of the identity of the author of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, see below.

component of the soldier's experience. I make reference to two incidents from the Caesarian army, the first when the camp of soldiers at Ruspina on the African coast become fearful and anxious in Caesar's absence, and the second the mutiny of Vesontio in the early days of the Gallic campaigns, and use the two to show how Caesar responds to his soldiers' need for information and even manipulates that flow of information to his own advantage. I conclude that the soldier is an eager consumer of information who is continually judging, assessing and estimating his own situation, analyzing his chances in battle, and engaging in evaluative conversation with his peers. While Aemilius urged his soldiers not to think, in practice it seems that they do little else.

II. The *Bellum Hispaniense* as the Soldier's Experience of Battle

The *Bellum Hispaniense* is a troubled text, for not only are the manuscripts in a sorry state of preservation, but the author himself is possessed of a style that is difficult to follow and admits of frequent mistakes. Rice Holmes famously referred to the work as "the worst book in Latin literature"; the attempts to reconstruct the deplorable text by scholars such as Mommsen "worthy of a better cause."⁵ Interest in the text for the most part has revolved around reconstructing the sense of the fragmented Latin, in an attempt to make sense where little remains. In this area the heroic efforts of Böhm are the most recent, and commentators have made valuable contributions, among them Klotz and Pascucci.⁶ Diouron's edition of the text published in 1999 has brought together this scholarship in a

⁵ Holmes (1967), 298.

⁶ On Böhm's suggested emendations to the Latin text, see Böhm 1988. Böhm has also published extensively on questions arising from the text. Klotz (1927); Pascucci (1965).

valuable resource which addresses the text sentence by sentence, including commentary, variants in the manuscripts, and comprehensive lists of suggested textual emendations.⁷ Some interest has been generated in the work for its use of colloquialisms and as a didactic example of “half-educated Latin.”⁸

In addition, the question of its authorship has drawn attention from the scholarly community, none of it more recent than Storch’s suggestion in 1977 that the unknown writer was a cavalry officer.⁹ A summary of the state of the question is to be found in Diouron’s introduction to the French edition.¹⁰ Suggestions have ranged from that of Adcock in the *Cambridge Ancient History* that the author was a simple soldier, to the suggestion of Van Hooff that he might have held the rank of legate, a man “like [Quintus] Pedius or Fabius Maximus... a politician whose career required some military service.”¹¹ The author’s background is similarly difficult to discern. Van Hooff’s guess of a budding politician would make him senatorial or equestrian class. Similarly Storch’s guess of *praefectus equitum* would make the author at least of equestrian rank, but this enlightens us little as to his background; on the one hand, men of the caliber of Cicero’s consular colleague of 63 B.C., C. Antonius, held that position, on the other, we know that centurions were frequently in possession of equestrian status by the time they left the legion.¹² In the early Principate, centurions could advance to the ranks of *tribunus militum* or *praefectus equitum* by promotion. As Syme suggests, this practice may pre-

⁷ Diouron (1999). The review of Marshall is also helpful; Marshall (2001), 49-51.

⁸ Thus Chilver in the First Edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. IX. (1970), 165. For similar, see Corbett (1962). The opinion of C.B.R. Pelling in the Third Edition is simply a more politely termed echo of the same sentiment, “His level of education was not high.” *OCD*³ (1996), 238.

⁹ Storch (1977), 201-4.

¹⁰ Diouron (1999), XV- XVII.

¹¹ Adcock *CAH*¹ Vol IX (1971), 703; Van Hooff (1974), 123-38; 125.

¹² Damon and Mackay (1995), 37-55.

date our earliest recorded example in the early Principate.¹³ It is sufficient for the current study to note that the consensus of the scholarship has the author inhabiting a rank which was lower than those who were part of Caesar's inner circle.¹⁴ It is, therefore, not unreasonable to treat his account as a "soldier's eye view".

As the work of a soldier, the text would be a unique document, but the scholarship which addresses the *Bellum Hispaniense* shows a marked reluctance to engage with it in terms of its significance to our broader understanding of historical questions. A notable exception is Van Hooff's 1974 article, "The Caesar of the *Bellum Hispaniense*" which addresses the work's "possible value as a source of information about Caesar's personality."¹⁵ Van Hooff's achievement is perhaps not so much his conclusion that the Caesar of these latter years is an embittered figure, but his insight that such a work can make a significant contribution to historical inquiry. It is upon this foundation that I wish to build in examining the *Bellum Hispaniense* as a valuable resource for approaching the question of the soldier's experience and identity. The *corpus Caesarianum* as a whole is a set of works based within the experience of warfare; texts written by men while on campaign. Of the whole corpus, the *Bellum Hispaniense* is the closest reflection of the soldier's experience of warfare that antiquity provides. Part of the reason that it has not received much attention as a historical document relates to the observation that it lacks precision in its account of the campaign.

¹³ Syme (1937), 128-9.

¹⁴ Storch deliberately estimates his rank as *praefectus militum* because it placed him in a position where he "would not have been an important member of Caesar's staff", 383. Van Hooff is alone in suggesting a rank as high as legate, and his reasoning about the level of military expertise that he expects to belong to a legate as opposed to a soldier or centurion is somewhat unclear.

¹⁵ Van Hooff (1974), 125.

Way, in his introduction to the Loeb edition of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, enumerated what he saw as the failings of the author:

As a military commentator, he lacks a sense of proportion; for while he describes –often at some length– all kinds of engagements, including quite minor skirmishes, as well as frequent atrocities, desertions and even apparent trivialities, yet he throws little light on problems of supply, finance, the number of troops engaged, and above all, the tactical reasons for the various maneuvers. His grasp of tactics seems, in fact, negligible.¹⁶

The assessment of the author of the *Bellum Hispaniense* is indicative of the questions that Way sought to ask of the text as military commentary. Way looked at the text as a military commentary, and he documented the places where he was perplexed about why the author had included something, or where he considered that the author lacked an understanding of tactics. We can take that essentially negative assessment and use it as a map for finding a positive interpretation of the text. The author's attention was not always on the aspects of the campaign which contributed to the overall understanding of the war, and the times when his focus wanders are our biggest clue the real condition of the soldier on campaign. This reading of the text will show us that its author has a deep interest in recording information, and that this information seems scattered because it represents the information that the soldier knew. The account is thus primarily impressionistic, not analytical. In order to elucidate this argument I make some basic observations about the interests of the author, and in particular where the primary focus of his attention lies. I will then set these in dialogue with behavior of other soldiers in the

¹⁶ From Way's introduction to the Loeb translation (1955), 305-6.

Caesarian corpus to demonstrate that the interests of the soldier as revealed in the *Bellum Hispaniense* reflect the interests of the soldiery more generally.

Way's main observations on the author's qualities as a military commentator were that the author had no over-arching perspective on the campaign and was ignorant of its technical functions (aspects like the grain supply), and that in place of these details he recorded minutiae with little bearing on the campaign. Way thought that the author simply lacked the ability to decide what was important, but a more reasonable explanation is that he recorded events with no impact on the overall arc of the campaign because they were important to his own experience. The author's failure to make his account accord with rules of narrative construction or endow it with a sense of historical progress is his greatest strength, "a voice that appears almost entirely uncontaminated by rhetoric."¹⁷ The events recorded are the events he knew or the events which it struck him to record, without seeking to manipulate them into a narrative framework. The events which puzzled Way for their inclusion –their very lack of place in any sort of narrative– fall into major areas: one, recording events which were conspicuous, if not meaningful, including relatively insignificant engagements, and, two, recording quantifiable statistical information, such as death tolls and numbers of deserters, even when these which yielded no significant intelligence or advantage to either side.

In regard to this first category of information, which pertains to some conspicuous incident, it will become clear that the incidents mentioned, when considered from the perspective of the soldier on the ground, are in fact likely to have been interpreted as meaningful to the troops themselves. We will examine four of these events: a duel

¹⁷ Melchior (2004), 175.

between two soldiers (25), the execution of an enemy soldier (27), the appearance of the moon (27), and the entry into camp of a civilian deserter (19). None of these events changed the course of the war or contributed anything significant to the story of the campaign. The answer to the question of their inclusion is found in the accounts themselves, which show that the incidents were directly relevant to the experience of certain soldiers or groups of soldiers.

The inclusion of the account of the duel, unfortunately fragmentary, is perhaps the easiest of these incidents to explain. After all, single combat was a traditional topic of interest for historians.¹⁸ There is, however, evidence that the duel was particularly conspicuous to the soldiers as a whole. The duel was between the challenging Pompeian soldier, Antistius Turpio, and the responding Caesarian, Q. Pompeius Niger. It is the reaction of the audience, carefully recorded by the author, which gives us a clue as to why this event, and others, might be included in the text. The duel seized the attention of the whole army, and the defiance of the Pompeian Antistius caused “all minds to turn from work to the spectacle.”¹⁹ Duels were the stuff of history and legend, and the author’s account shares certain key similarities with descriptions of duels in the annalistic tradition.²⁰ It is hardly surprising that the author recorded these events: not only did the real live event fit a genre of historical discourse, but it was also exciting and important to the soldiers at the time.

The second example is the author’s story of the execution of an enemy soldier who had killed his own brother in camp. This tale appears abruptly at the end of chapter

¹⁸ Oakley (1985), 392-410.

¹⁹ *B. Hisp.* 25.5: Quoniam ferocitas Antistii omnium mentes converterat ab opere ad spectandum.

²⁰ Diouron (1999), 105-6.

27, where it finds its place between two events. The first of these is the Pompeian forces' burning of the town of Carruca in revenge for closing its gates to his army. The other is the movement of Caesar's forces, which marched to the plain of Munda. In between the two events we find the sentence, "and a soldier who had murdered his own brother in camp was intercepted by our troops and clubbed to death."²¹ Both of the remarks about the armies' movements are obviously of some importance, but it seems odd that the author includes such a random incident between them. Diouron observes with some puzzlement that even despite the grammar of the sentence, which attempts to link with the previous reference to the burning of Carruca in commencing with the word *milesque*, that the incident bears no relationship with what came before.²² Why might the author include this information at all, and especially in such a strange place in the narrative? The answer is surely that this is more evidence of the impressionistic interpretations of our author.

The event mentioned is a punishment known as *fustiarum*, which Polybius describes as follows; "The tribune takes a cudgel and just touches the condemned man with it, after which *all in the camp* beat or stone him, in most cases dispatching him in the camp itself."²³ (emphasis mine) The event is doubtless recorded because it was something conspicuous which involved if not all, at least a large number of the troops in the camp. In short, it was the type of event which would surely be news among the soldiers, no matter how little the event might have mattered in technical and analytical

²¹ *B. Hisp.* 27.6: milesque qui fratrem suum in castris iugulasset, interceptus est a nostris et fusti percussus.

²² Diouron (1999), 116 : "ce fait n'a aucun rapport logique avec le precedent"

²³ Polyb 6.37.2-3: λαβὼν ξύλον ὁ χιλιάρχος τούτῳ τοῦ κατακριθέντος οἷον ἤψατο μόνον, οὐ γενομένου πάντες οἱ τοῦ στρατοπέδου τύπτοντες τοῖς ξύλοις καὶ τοῖς λίθοις τοὺς μὲν πλείστους ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ στρατοπεδείᾳ καταβάλλουσι.

terms. If this event happened while the Caesarian troops were camped near Carruca, it would chronologically rest in its proper place in the narrative between Pompey burning the town and the Caesarian troops moving on to Munda. The event if, not significant to the campaign as a whole, was certainly significant to the soldiers' experience of that campaign.

Our other examples fit the same pattern. Chapter 27 explains that Pompey had moved his troops to an otherwise unknown locale given in the MSS as Spalis or Sparis.²⁴ The author continues, "Before Caesar set out for the same place, the moon was observed at around the sixth hour."²⁵ The moon appearing in the middle of the day is recorded as a prodigy in Julius Obsequens, and thus probably earned its place in the narrative here for the same reason.²⁶ Caesar himself paid little heed to prodigies, and is said to have ignored both omens pertaining to military endeavor and those predicting his own personal fortunes.²⁷ Small wonder then that Caesar himself ignores them in his own works. For the soldiery as a whole, however, such an event was likely to cause if not alarm, at least conversation about the unusual occurrence. Livy records that in 168 B.C., the common soldiers in the army of Aemilius Paulus in Macedonia were warned of an eclipse by the astronomer and tribune of the soldiers, Gaius Sulpicius Galba, so that "no-one should regard it a bad omen."²⁸ Scipio, addressing his mutinous troops in 206, commented, "When there is a shower of stones, or buildings are struck by lightning, or animals

²⁴ Various conjectures have been made as to the identity of this town, for the most recent survey of these suggestions see Diouron (1999), 111-2.

²⁵ *B. Hisp.* 27.3: Caesar prius quam eodem est profectus, luna hora circiter visa est.

²⁶ Julius Obsequens 103, observed by Diouron (1999), 116; Klotz (1927), 90.

²⁷ Suet. *Iul.* 59, for Caesar disregarding omens pertaining to the military, 81 for his disregard of prodigies involving his own fortunes.

²⁸ Livy 44.37.6: ne quis id pro portento acciperet.

produce monstrous offspring, you consider these things as portents.”²⁹ This earlier source indicates that ordinary Roman citizens concerned themselves with portents and signs, and that they were sources of alarm.

In a similar vein, the author mentions the incident of a civilian woman who leapt from the battlements of the besieged city of Ategua and came across to the Caesarian lines, and a message thrown from a citizen wishing a personal surrender was found under the wall (19). This appears to find its place in the narrative for no other reason than the troops were stationed in a position to observe the goings-on on the battlements, and these events were particularly conspicuous topics of gossip among the soldiery.

Some events of the author’s narrative thus find their place for their interest or peculiarity, but this is not the extent of his impressionistic style. When Way examined the incongruous information in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, he highlighted the extraneous information as “all kinds of engagements, including quite minor skirmishes, as well as frequent atrocities.” As examples he pointed to the skirmishes of chapters 13, 21, and 27, which he, anticipating a narrative arc, claimed had no place in the overall story of the campaign, or significance to the war. An examination of these moments in fact points to a very good reason for their inclusion. They are incidents in which men died. In one incident, it is three horsemen on outpost duty who are attacked by enemy cavalry, “they were driven from their post, and three of them were killed.”³⁰ In chapter 21, forty of the enemy cavalry set upon a watering party, “killing some of its members and leading others

²⁹ Livy 28.27: lapides pluere et fulmina iaci de caelo et insuetos fetus animalia edere uos portenta esse putatis.

³⁰ *B. Hisp.* 13.1: de statione sunt deiecti et occisi tres.

off alive.”³¹ In chapter 27 it is the simple statement, “a number of our cavalry were killed while collecting wood in an olive grove.”³²

While they are incidental to the campaign, each of these incidents would have had a visible presence on the ground and a real emotional effect on the soldiers. Over and above the fact that it was doubtless news in the camp, soldiers killed in war were cremated and then buried in mass graves.³³ The smoke from the pyre alone would have been a highly visible sign of the day’s events, although, as we learn in chapter 18, in Pompey’s army attempts were made to hush up the fact that they had lost thirty-five men in a cavalry engagement, presumably for the demoralizing effect this had on the army as a whole. If Pompey bothered to hide this kind of information from his soldiers, it was because otherwise such news would spread rapidly among the troops.

The same criterion can be applied to the atrocities, which are all highly visible actions of violence; the couriers captured in the Caesarian camp whose hands were cut off (12), the Pompeian troops killing townspeople in the city of Ategua whom they suspected of siding with Caesar, and hurling their bodies from the battlements (15), a slave being burned alive, others crucified, and an enemy soldier beheaded (20), and seventy four men of Ubici being beheaded by Pompeian troops, and their bodies hurled from the battlements (21). These incidents are both dramatic, and it, seems, conspicuous: the couriers had their hands cut off in the camp itself, and throwing bodies from battlements is an action surely designed to draw attention.

³¹ *B. Hisp.* 21.2: non nullos interfecerunt, item alios vivos abduxerunt.

³² *B. Hisp.* 27.1: equites in oliveto, dum lignantur, interfecti sunt aliquot.

³³ Hope (2003), 79-97; 87-8.

It is quite clear that if the author was concerned to give an account of the campaign, it was an account which was not directed solely at explaining how the war was conducted and how it was won. It is an account without filters of this type, the very details that seem incongruous when held up to the very practical tone of the genuine Caesarian works giving it its distinct, and very human, character. The author records what is most striking, the events that made an impression upon he and his fellow soldiers for their peculiarity, conspicuousness, or brutality, in short, the things which gripped the mind and imagination of the soldier.

The second category of information reveals a slightly different interest on the author's part, that is his tendency to catalogue statistics, in particular which pertain to incidents of desertion, of which the *Bellum Hispaniense* contains an unusually high number.³⁴ In the text's forty two chapters, there are fifteen incidences of desertion. Four of these are in regard to slaves or townspeople, that is, non-combatants, or at least non-military personnel. In the remaining eleven incidents which involve combatants, three are desertions of soldiers from Caesar to Pompey, and eight are incidences of desertion from Pompey to Caesar.³⁵ More revealing, perhaps, is the significance of the incidents; nine of the fifteen incidents result in a meaningful piece of information being transmitted

³⁴ Of the 42 chapters of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, 13 contain one or more statistics pertaining to numbers of troops, number of hostages or deserters, or similar information such as numbers of the dead and wounded; a further five reference some measure of distance, and two more pertain to money. In total, 19 of the 42 chapters contain one or more statistics of some sort, or roughly 45%. Caesar also keeps statistics but they occur much less frequently.

³⁵ Desertions Caesar to Pompey. 6; 7; 20. Desertions Pompey to Caesar;. 11 (2 instances); 16, 18 (2 instances); 20; 21; 26.

from one side to the other.³⁶ The remaining six incidents involve either a high number of deserters or named persons of high rank.³⁷

The author's preoccupation with instances of desertion is unsurprising if we consider the value of such information. Ezov in his study of intelligence and intelligence-gathering in the Caesarian corpus highlights the importance of information of this type; "The information which the defectors could supply was of particularly high quality since it was internal, and was unique in providing mental and psychological insights concerning the state of the enemy, such as the attitude and morale of the troops."³⁸ In addition intelligence from deserters, if they were of high enough rank, could provide information on a variety of tactical aspects available in no other fashion.³⁹ This information was particularly valuable in civil wars, and especially important was the contribution of high ranking individuals, since the higher the rank, the greater the chance that the officer in question knew crucial and privileged intelligence. Our author pays close attention to the flow of information being brought to, and out of, the camp, and records incidences of deserters whether they contribute something significant to the campaign or not. All desertion is potentially good news, and we can imagine that deserters themselves would be news.

³⁶ Deserters who convey information; 6; 16; 18 (3 incidents) 20; 22; 26; 27.

³⁷ High number of deserters or named persons appear in chapters 7; 11 (2 incidents) ; 20; 21; 26.

³⁸ Ezov (1996), 86.

³⁹ Ezov (1996), 72: "The uniqueness of intelligence from prisoners is the view it provides of the enemy from the inside, on matters such as battle readiness, intentions, routines, morale, special measures, topography, exact organization and location of the force, none of which could be obtained through the usual means of patrols and observation posts". N.B Ezov fails to make a significant distinction between prisoners and deserters, whom he treats as the same. His remarks here follow his discussion of deserters, and are equally applicable to them.

This preoccupation with information is clearly not unique to our author who, by warrant of his literary aspirations, could be expected to seek out and record whatever intelligence was readily available, and indeed, to revise his account as retrospective information came to his attention. The fact is that the condition of the author as a consumer of information seems to reflect a preoccupation of soldiers in general. Soldiers demonstrably seek information and disseminate it among each other. It is probably the prevalence of this habit which is the source of much of the information that our author records. To put it simply, soldiers talk. We know that information of a personal nature was bandied around the camp; Sallust tells us that during the war with Jugurtha two divisions of Metellus' army, those left in camp and those who went out to battle, met in the dark. When each side realized that the other troops were friendly, they immediately began to exchange news and stories, "The cheerful soldiers called out to one another, told of their exploits and heard the tales of others, and each man praised his own valiant deeds to the skies."⁴⁰ We also find soldiers engaged in information seeking by deliberately initiating dialogues with those around them. In the mutiny of the Caesarian army at Vesontio, it is conversations with Gauls and traders which yield the stories about the physical stature of the Germans which so frighten the Roman soldiers.⁴¹ Roman soldiers are even recorded in dialogue with enemy soldiers and civilians in besieged towns.⁴²

⁴⁰ Sall. *Jug.* 53: milites alius alium laeti appellant, acta edocent atque audiunt, sua quisque fortia facta ad caelum fert.

⁴¹ Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.40.

⁴² According to Livy, during the siege of Veii, one of the Roman soldiers on outpost duty conversed with one of the townspeople, arranged a meeting with one of their soothsayers, and was thus able to discover the meaning of an important portent (5.15); In the Second Punic war, the soldiers invading the city of Arpi, held by Carthaginian troops, came into conflict with those garrison troops and the citizen troops of Arpi. When the Roman troops and the citizens of Arpi came to recognize one another, they entered into conversation, which eventually led to the citizens changing allegiance. (Livy 24.47).

Soldiers are frequently found openly airing their opinions, which most often comes to the attention of our sources when it is either very positive or very negative. Caesar, in particular, comments on the collective opinion of the soldiers as overheard in the camp. Early in the civil wars his soldiers objected to his decision not to engage with the troops of Afranius. It seems they did not trouble to hide their opinions, either, for Caesar writes, “the soldiers said openly among themselves that, since such an opportunity of victory was being let slip, they would not fight even when Caesar wished them to.”⁴³ On other occasions the talk is more positive, such as when the remark is heard from troops on sentry duty that they would eat bark rather than let Pompey escape.⁴⁴ The discussion of orders, strategies, and tactics among the soldiery was a frequent occurrence. In a recent article, Chrissanthos has investigated the right of *libertas*, or free speech, in the Republican army, and concluded that the soldiers both knew about this right, and exercised it. He writes, “the soldiers discussed literally anything concerning their military service.”⁴⁵

If soldiers actively participate in a process of independently seeking information, then they are also processing and analyzing the information that they possess in conversation with one another, and coming up with collective conclusions. This often translates into the soldiers assuming the right to act upon their conclusions, and it is in this process that we find tension arising between the professed ideal of the mute, physical

⁴³ Caes. *B. Civ.* 1.72: milites vero palam inter se loquebantur, quoniam talis occasio victoriae dimitteretur, etiam cum vellet Caesar, sese non esse pugnatuos.

⁴⁴ Caes. *B. Civ.* 2.49.

⁴⁵ Chrissanthos (2004), 355.

soldier, and the reality of the soldier who needs to be psychologically comfortable in order to continue to act as a soldier.

One such example of soldiers deliberately seeking information, and assuming the right to act upon it in a dramatic fashion, occurs during the civil wars, in which the legions under the Pompeian legates Petreius and Afranius struck camp close to the enemy. When the two commanders left the camp, their soldiers seized the opportunity to venture over and engage in conversation with their counterparts. As Caesar has it, their object was to inquire after men they knew or fellow-townspeople; but quickly they began to discuss a matter of much greater importance, the disposition of the commander and the likely consequences of changing their allegiance. They carefully sounded out the Caesarian soldiers for the possible consequences of their actions, and, finding the advice of the Caesarians positive, made a collective decision to change sides. They sought assurances for the lives of their commanders and then declared:

If these conditions are assured they guarantee to transfer their colors at once and send centurions of the first rank to Caesar as deputies to treat of peace.⁴⁶

These are hardly Aemilius' mute and unthinking soldiers, but men weighing and analyzing their position and coming to a dramatic decision. They consider the parameters within which they can act and still maintain legitimacy, their request for the lives of their commanders motivated by this concern, "fearing lest they seem to have conceived some crime in their hearts or to have betrayed their own."⁴⁷ For the soldiers, there is no

⁴⁶ *Caes. B. Civ.* 1.74: Quibus confirmatis rebus se statim signa transluros confirmant legatosque de pace primorum ordinum centuriones ad Caesarem mittunt.

⁴⁷ *Caes. B. Civ.* 1.74: ne quod in se scelus concepisce neu suos prodidisse videantur.

absolute of blind obedience such as Aemilius envisioned. If the unit can be brought over intact, commanders included, they have simply made a decision to change their allegiance, rather than perpetrated an act of betrayal. The act of making this decision itself they consider to be entirely valid.⁴⁸

III. Caesar and the Management of Information

If the soldiers actively look for information, and conduct themselves on the basis of what they find, as suggested by the *Bellum Hispaniense* and other evidence from the Caesarian corpus, there is also evidence that Caesar was aware of this behavior and manipulated the flow of information accordingly. Caesar demonstrably responds to the kinds of concerns that occupy the author of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, and soldiers as a whole. It has long been recognized that Caesar was an insightful leader who displayed sensitivity to the psychological concerns of his soldiers.⁴⁹ If our author provides us with an impressionistic account of how a soldier experiences a campaign, then Caesar's own works show an awareness of this experience on his part and an attempt to relate to and respond to that experience. Lendon has pointed out that no other writer gives considerations of psychology as much prominence as does Caesar.⁵⁰ This consideration mirrors what we learn from the *Bellum Hispaniense* about where the soldier's attention is directed, and in particular we can witness soldiers collectively gathering, weighing, and analyzing information relating to their situation. Caesar's approach to this process is

⁴⁸ For more on this, see Chrissanthos (2004).

⁴⁹ See for example, Elmore (1925), 430-2; Collins (1952); Lendon (1999).

⁵⁰ Lendon (1999), 296.

twofold; firstly, when the soldiers come to a negative conclusion about their chances, his strategy is not to deny their right to form opinions, but to attempt to convince them that his own conclusions are superior; secondly, he tries to intervene in the first stages of this process and control and manipulate the information of which the soldiers are aware.

Caesar's commentaries show time and time again that the ignorant soldier is a fearful soldier. "As a rule", he writes, "what is out of sight disturbs men's minds more than what they can see."⁵¹ This he writes in reference to front line troops at the siege of Alesia, who realize that their colleagues are fighting to protect their rear. A more startling incident which perfectly illustrates this principle, and the fact that it holds true on and off the battlefield, occurs during the African campaign. The author describes Caesar's actions: he advanced to Leptis, and then abruptly changed direction and returned to Ruspina.⁵² At this point the author himself seems unsure of exactly Caesar's object in carrying out this action. He imagines [*existimo*] that the object of this exercise was to secure the coastal towns behind the army.⁵³ With this statement the author introduces a note of doubt into the narrative, which is picked up and expanded as he continues the narrative. He himself was unsure of the reasons behind the movements of the army, and it soon becomes clear that our author is not the only one being kept in the dark. Caesar leaves the army at Ruspina, and taking some of his veteran legions, departs for the coast, leaving, it seems, no explanation for his actions.

⁵¹ Caes. *B. Gall.* 7.84: omnia enim plerumque quae absunt vehementius hominum mentes perturbant.

⁵² The author of the *Bellum Africum* and the *Bellum Alexandrinum* were, like the *Bellum Hispaniense*, unknown in antiquity, Suet. *Iul.* 56.1. The state of the question of its author has changed little in recent years, and is assumed to be a young officer from Caesar's camp, perhaps a tribune, see Bouvet (1997), XXXVII.

⁵³ *B. Afr.* 9: Hoc eum idcirco existimo recepisse ut maritima oppida post se ne vacua relinqueret praesidioque firmata ad classis receptacula muniret.

Left in a state of total ignorance, the atmosphere in the camp became anxious.

The author writes:

Everyone in the army was ignorant of the plan of the imperator, and everyone sought to know it, and they were troubled with great fear and depression.⁵⁴

The soldiers, as was their habit, began a process of assessing their situation and surroundings. The author provides us a summary of their circumstance:

For being few in number, mostly new recruits, and those not all disembarked, they saw themselves exposed, upon a foreign coast, to the mighty forces of a crafty nation, supported by an innumerable cavalry.⁵⁵

The factors that the soldiers consider are, naturally, those which relate to their safety; the number and experience of their own forces, the number and character of the enemy, and the position in which they were encamped. The conclusion that they draw is primarily negative, and so their next step is to look for mitigating factors: “Nor could they discern anything to console them in their present plight, no help in the councils of their comrades”⁵⁶

We have already been told that no-one in the camp knows more than any other, and there is no new information to be had, except, the author explains, in one thing:

They derived all their hope from the alacrity, vigor, and wonderful cheerfulness that appeared in their general's countenance; for he was of an intrepid spirit, and behaved with undaunted resolution and confidence. On his conduct, therefore, they entirely relied, and hoped

⁵⁴ *B. Afr.* 10: Omnibus in exercitu insciis et requirentibus imperatoris consilium, magno metu ac tristimonia sollicitabantur.

⁵⁵ *B. Afr.* 10: Parva enim cum copia et ea tironum neque omni exposita in Africa contra magnas copias et insidiosae nationis equitatum innumerabilem se expositos videbant.

⁵⁶ *B. Afr.* 10: neque quicquam solacium in praesentia neque auxilium in suorum consilio animum advertebant.

to a man, that by his skill and talents, all difficulties would vanish before them.⁵⁷

It seems that the commander's behavior, like the land and the numbers of the enemy, is a valid source from which the soldiers derive information, and hence their assessment of their own situation. They are searching for reassurances to alleviate the fear caused by the unfamiliar situation; the unknown that Caesar told us so troubles men's minds. Slight as it may seem, Caesar's own manner is their only hint as to the reality of their circumstances.

As it turns out, the men's anxiety was not unjustified, for the author in the next chapter reveals what Caesar's purpose had been. He had left the camp intending to take the fleet and conduct a search for some transport ships that had gone astray. As it happened, these ships had found their way to port of their own accord. The lack of information in the camp was no accident, but a deliberate action on Caesar's part. The author tells us that Caesar had hidden this action from his troops, "lest, on account of their own small numbers and the multitude of the enemy, fear should make them fail in their duty."⁵⁸ In this case, the discomfort caused by the unknown was preferable to the truth, that Caesar intended to embark upon a dangerous mission that, had it been necessary, would have kept him from Ruspina for a much longer time. In his cheerfulness he had been dissimulating for the gaze of the troops. Caesar had already told us that he knows what happens when troops are kept in ignorance, and he

⁵⁷ *B. Afr.* 10: nisi in ipsius imperatoris vultu vigore mirabilique hilaritate; animum enim altum et erectum prae se gerebat. Huic adquiescebant homines et in eius scientia et consilio omnia sibi proclivia omnes fore sperabant.

⁵⁸ *B. Afr.* 11: neque eam rem eos voluisse scire qui in praesidiis relictis sui milites fuissent, uti nihil propter suorum paucitatem et hostium multitudinem metu deficerent.

deliberately manipulates one of their sources of information, that of his own manner.

Caesar has Pompey practice a similar act when he is on the verge of defeat. He retreats to his camp, calling to the soldiers that he is going to rally the camp guards.⁵⁹ In the *Bellum Hispaniense*, we are told that Pompey forbade the news of the death of thirty-five soldiers to be made known in the camp, a circumstance which comes to the ears of the Caesarians by way of a deserter:

It was at this time that a standard-bearer from the First legion deserted to us and it became known that on the day when the cavalry action was fought his own unit lost thirty-five men, but that they were not allowed to report this in Pompey's camp or to say that any man had been lost.⁶⁰

Both commanders are shown to be manipulating information flow. Troops ought not to be kept in ignorance, since a complete lack of information frequently leads to fear and thus pessimistic interpretation; as Livy writes, "Fear is an interpreter always inclined to the worst side."⁶¹ On the other hand, the realities of an unfortunate situation ought to be hidden for the same reasons.

The second way of keeping the soldiers psychologically sound is to convince them that the conclusion at which the commander has arrived is superior to their own. In this case, the commander in effect gives the cerebral soldier a cerebral answer, but we see Caesar wanting to stamp his authority on such matters, answering complaints but maintaining the veneer of an Aemilius-like authority. In one battle against Vercingetorix's forces Caesar lost control of his soldiers, who rushed forward in their

⁵⁹ Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.94.

⁶⁰ *B. Hisp.* 18: Eodemque tempore signifer de legione prima transfugit, et innotuit quo die equestre proelium factum esset, suo signo perisse homines XXXV, neque licere castris Cn. Pompei nuntiare neque dicere perisse quemquam.

⁶¹ Livy 27.44: metu interprete semper in deteriora inclinato.

eagerness. His rebuke to them reinforces the universal nature of the principal that the commander's judgment is superior, their real crime in supposing that "they had a truer instinct than their imperator for the victory and final result."⁶²

A good illustration of Caesar's negotiation between the declaration of authority and the need to keep the soldiers psychologically sound occurs in his description of the mutiny near Vesontio during the Gallic campaigns. The account of the mutiny itself exists in two accounts, that of Caesar himself⁶³, and a version of Cassius Dio.⁶⁴ The two accounts differ significantly in that Dio's includes an objection on the part of the soldiers that the war itself was being illegally conducted on account of Caesar's personal ambitions. It is not my current purpose to assess which of these accounts is likely more accurate⁶⁵, but merely to examine how Caesar presents himself handling the incident; denying the right of the soldier to hold opinions at all, while simultaneously engaging with those opinions in an attempt to persuade them that his own assessment of the situation is the superior.

We are told that Caesar's army was halted close to Vesontio in order to gather supplies, and during this pause the soldiers began to speak with Gauls and traders. These apparently told the troops tales about the Germans, whom they claimed to be of enormous stature, "incredible in regard to their virtus and skill at arms", so terrifying that they themselves could barely endure their gaze. In absorbing and believing this intelligence the soldiers' minds and spirits are seized with fear. They have concluded

⁶² Caes. *B. Gall.* 7.52: quod plus se quam imperatorem de victoria atque exitu rerum sentire existimarent.

⁶³ Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.39-41.

⁶⁴ Dio Cass. 38.35-47.

⁶⁵ For the argument that Dio's account is in fact the more accurate account, see Hagendahl (1944), 1-40.

that the Germans are superior to their army and consequently rendered themselves afraid and impotent. Precisely, Aemilius might tell us, why soldiers ought not to think. When they seek to cover their fear, however, what some of the soldiers use as an excuse is telling:

Those of them who desired to be thought less timid would declare that they were not afraid of the enemy, but feared the narrow defiles and the vast forests which lay between themselves and Ariovistus, or a possible failure of proper transport for the corn supply.⁶⁶

For the soldiers, an assessment of tactics is preferable to an admission of fear, for one does not pretend a sentiment that is less acceptable than the truth. Their opinion about tactical considerations is offered in place of their real failing, but it is hard to see why this should be any more legitimate. On the face of it, it is not, and in fact Caesar's first words upon gathering together the centurions of all grades is to emphasize the act, do not think, rule. He reprimands them, "first and foremost because they thought it was their business to ask or to consider in which direction or with what purpose they were being led."⁶⁷ In this sentiment he agrees entirely with another of Aemilius' dictums: "Those who were not called into council had no right to ventilate their own opinions either publicly or privately."⁶⁸ The centurions ought to base their willingness to follow upon faith, not knowledge or understanding of the overall arc of the campaign. But while Aemilius' speech makes this the bottom line and forestalls any further discussion of the matter, Caesar immediately launches into a refutation of the very sentiments that he had just

⁶⁶ Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.39: Qui se ex his minus timidos existimari volebant, non se hostem vereri, sed angustias itineris et magnitudinem silvarum quae intercederent inter ipsos atque Ariovistum, aut rem frumentariam, ut satis commode supportari posset, timere dicebant.

⁶⁷ Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.40.1: primum, quod aut quam in partem aut quo consilio ducerentur sibi quaerendum aut cogitandum putarent.

⁶⁸ Livy 44.34: qui non sint aduocati, eos nec palam nec secreto iactare consilia sua.

declared inappropriate. It is a process of logical reasoning, which, in a certain way, circumvents reality in order to offer a more optimistic picture than either the soldiers' assessment of their situation, or, we suspect, the truth.

Virtus in the *Bellum Gallicum* is the product of experience, and that on this particular occasion the mutiny arises from officers that Caesar points to as being inexperienced.⁶⁹ He asks them why they have despaired of their *virtus*, pointing to the victories over the Cimbri and the Teutones under Gaius Marius, and the slave revolt. This, naturally, is only reflected glory, borrowed *virtus*, since the wars with the Cimbri and Teutones were in 101-2 B.C., and the slave revolt 73-71 B.C. In essence, Caesar undermines the conclusion of the soldiers by providing them additional information. Their fear stems from the conclusion that they will not be a match for the Germans. Caesar introduces a new line of questioning that they have not considered: Roman armies can and have been successful in combat against the Germans despite their enormous stature and fearsome aspect. The pretense forwarded by the soldiers is addressed in exactly the same pattern:

Those persons who ascribe their own cowardice to a pretended anxiety for the corn supply or to the defiles on the route are guilty of presumption, for they appear either to despair of the commander's doing his duty or instruct him in it. These matters are my own concern; corn is being supplied by the Sequani, the Leuci, the Ligones, and the corn crops in the fields are already ripe; of the route you yourselves will shortly be able to judge.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Riggsby (2006), 83-105.

⁷⁰ Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.40: Qui suum timorem in rei frumentariae simulationem angustiasque itineris conferrent, facere arroganter, cum aut de officio imperatoris desperare aut praescribere viderentur. Haec sibi esse curae; frumentum Sequanos, Leucos, Lingones subministrare, iamque esse in agris frumenta matura; de itinere ipsos brevi tempore iudicatos.

Once again we return to the act, do not think rule. Caesar's argument runs basically as follows: a declaration that his assessment of any given situation is superior to the soldiers', and the furnishing of further information to help the soldiers change their minds, concluding with an invitation to the soldiers to make the very judgment that he had just declared none of their business. He responds to the cerebral soldier with cerebral assurances, and by doing so allows and acknowledges that the soldier has an identity as a thinker.

IV. Conclusion

Despite declarations to the contrary, soldiers do not act as if their role is purely physical, nor do they interpret their identity as soldiers to relate entirely to their physical bodies. The soldier writer of the *Bellum Hispaniense* betrays an almost obsessive interest in information and sources of information, giving us a clue as to where the soldier's gaze is directed. Movement of troops, supplies, and the overall tactical significance of battles in the campaign take a secondary role to the immediate on-the-ground view: who is coming into the camp, who is leaving, who is fighting, who is dying. The condition of the soldier is to be alert to his circumstances, maintaining a place in an ongoing dialogue of his peers which constantly estimates and judges the safety and wisdom of military decisions. The soldier is a consumer of information, whose psychological wellbeing depends on being able to make a positivistic assessment of his own situation. As such, he is afraid of what he does not know, and will cast around for information to alleviate his feeling of helplessness, as the soldiers at Ruspina do.

Caesar shows himself sensitive to the role of information and how it acts upon the soldier. Aemilius declared the soldier a physical being, needful of nothing but his own strength. Caesar, by contrast shows us that the soldier must be dealt with in respect to how he sees himself, not how he is perceived from the outside. Caesar chooses to manipulate and disseminate the information that the soldier sees, and in failing that, to introduce new information and lines of interpretation that address the value of the soldier's conclusions, not his right to hold opinions.

The findings of this chapter form a gateway into the following discussion about the soldier's psychology in chapter six, which is based on a set of psychological studies which sought to examine performance and combat motivation. The theme of what makes a soldier perform and keep performing was in evidence in the author studies in chapters two and three, for the authors' conceptions of the soldier are performance-based, and look for the soldier's contribution to the success of Roman society. For Polybius, an environment which encouraged volunteerism and sacrifice, and his embracing of that culture made him throw himself into danger. For Livy, the soldier only remained as soldier as long as he continued to engage in the acts of a soldier. Both these authors are essentially dealing with combat motivation, and in Caesar we see it take a more detailed turn. As a cerebral being, the soldier needs to be psychologically comfortable and confident in order to perform, rather than threatened with death or social exclusion. In the next chapter, we will see that in reality, all of the pressures mentioned by our authors are working on the soldier.

Chapter Six

Nothing Ever Changes: The Psychology of the Soldier

I. Introduction

The army of the Late Republic, often referred to as the “post-Marian” Roman army, is distinguished by the administrative reforms which made it a professional force, and the resultant changes in the attitude and mentality of its soldiers. The most obvious psychological change was the shift in loyalty which caused the soldier to look to his commander for pay, booty, safety, and land after his service, instead of looking to the state. In Chapter One I framed the soldier’s service as a kind of social bargain, where if he did his duty, the military would be careful with his life and endeavor to return him to his plough. In the Late Republic, that hope lay with the soldier’s permanent commander with whom he might serve for many years. The scholarship surrounding the changes in the Roman army has recognized the soldier’s psychology as a factor, but often presents it in opaque terms. In 1969 Watson wrote that Marius’ gift of an eagle to each legion “gave the legion a sense of corporate identity and enabled it to build up *esprit de corps*.”¹ De Blois writes that a major factor in relationships between commander and troops was the “strong collective identities of groups of soldiers” and even that for Caesar’s troops, “years of continuous fighting had given them a strong sense of unity and a keen understanding of their own interests.”² While these statements are helpful in piecing

¹ Watson (1969), 22.

² de Blois (2007), 173; 175.

together why soldiers acted as they did in the Late Republican armies, they are at the same time unexamined, deriving from observations about recorded actions and generalized principles about human nature. In fact we can detail and nuance these kinds of statements by introducing comparative material which has been analyzed from a psychological perspective.

This chapter uses an interdisciplinary approach of applying psychological theory about groups to the behavior observed and reported in the Roman legions, which is available to us in the Caesarian corpus.³ The theory used in this chapter is called group cohesion theory, a well-known and documented branch of psychology which investigates the relationship between members of a “primary group”, defined as individuals who interact with each other daily on a face-to-face basis.⁴ Psychology seeks to understand human behavior for its practical, future applications, and the study of group behavior applies to the corporate world, where the lessons learned from group dynamics can be used to promote a higher rate of efficiency among workers⁵; in the field of disaster prevention, associated with studies of panic, where group behavior studies can influence policies about contingency plans for terrorist attacks and mass evacuations⁶; and in the military, where it is applied for the prevention and cure of undesirable behavior on the battlefield and to ensure the psychological comfort of combat troops.⁷

³ This is the earliest period in which such a study can be attempted, due to the nature of the evidence for the early and middle Republican periods. Of our major sources, only Polybius was contemporary to the events which he described, and he had little interest in examining the soldier figure as an individual. See Chapter Two.

⁴ Cooley (1909), xv-xxx; Henderson (1985), 164-6.

⁵ See for example, Seashore (1977).

⁶ Mawson (2007), xi.

⁷ See for example, Shirom (1976).

A high proportion of research pertaining to group theory stems from the study of soldiers in warfare, since it provides an environment of sustained stress, and naturally, because the study of behavior in warfare is best conducted with subjects during or immediately after their experience in war.⁸ For this reason, the studies available in this particular branch of psychology correspond to the pattern of human conflict in the last century. Studies conducted in 1948, such as that of Shils and Jankowitz on the Wehrmacht, genuinely represent some of the most contemporary information on aspects of group dynamics. Because they depend on occasions when certain human behaviors occur, often the most important evidence was gathered fifty or more years ago. The evidence most frequently cited in this chapter derives ultimately from the Second World War, the Vietnam War, and operations in Iraq.⁹

I approach the question of the Late Republican soldier's loyalty from two angles. Firstly, I examine the broad practices and policies of the Roman army, focusing on the camp and disciplinary rules. I then hold up as comparison similar practices of the German Wehrmacht before and during the Second World War, which were expressly designed to secure group cohesion based on psychological principles. This comparison suggests that Roman soldiers were likely to form their closest bonds with their immediate fellows because of isolation from non-military influences.

The second approach to the investigation is to create a case study of Caesar's veteran Gallic troops in the mutiny of 47 B.C., in which Caesar is said to have quelled the

⁸ Janis (1963), 228: "One of the values of concentrating on group behavior under conditions of extreme physical danger is that we can sometimes see quite clearly the manifestations of basic psychological processes."

⁹ WWII: Shils and Jankowitz (1948); Janis (1963); The Vietnam War: Henderson (1985); Iraq: Wong et al. (2003).

rebellion with a single word, “Quirites”. It is compared with observed behaviors of groups in conditions similar to those identified in the Roman army. This comparison suggests that the behavior may stem from a phenomenon of leadership dependency, in which groups become overly pre-occupied with authorities whom they believe control their safety, and react with extreme sensitivity to indications of disapproval. The study concludes that the “Quirites” story represents a perfectly plausible reaction on the part of the soldiers based on the science of human behavior.

It should be noted that there are certain limitations to studies of this sort. Most importantly, it is evident that we lack the interaction with Roman soldiers on which the comparative psychological analyses of soldier groups are based. We cannot ask the Romans specifically, for example, if their camps reinforced a sense of community and group cohesion, although we do have several pieces of convincing evidence that support this hypothesis. Nor can we ask the individual Roman soldier if he felt that the bonds he formed with his comrades over the years were stronger than those he felt for his family. We can, however, hold up as comparison what we know of the behavior and psychological analyses of soldiers under conditions similar to those in the Roman army. This additional insight goes a long way to elucidating the reasons behind the traditional recognition that the soldier’s loyalty changes focus in the Late Republic. It is worth reiterating here that no challenge is being made to the idea of the soldier’s changing loyalties. What this study represents is an attempt to use the study of human behavior to provide a better and more accurate understanding of why and how this happens.

II. The Methodology of Psychology and History

It has long been understood that the historical craft inevitably employs a form of psychological analysis. The German historian and philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey argued that the historian himself is an instrument of research, as someone who perceives, interprets, and above all forges a relationship with his subject by recreating it in his own mind. For Dilthey, the practice of history necessitates that the historian mentally cast himself into the situation which is the object of his research and “re-live” that experience. The historian uses two innate tools —sympathy and empathy— in order to form the basis of his historical understanding. Dilthey held that the subjective experience of the historian in the world is his launching point for any cognition of the past.¹⁰

The theory of empathetic history was taken up by R.G. Collingwood, whose seminal work, *The Idea of History* (1946), was heavily influenced by his study of Freud and theories of psychoanalysis. Collingwood held that history itself was the re-enactment of thought, and, as for Dilthey, the casting of the self into an imagined historical past in order to be able to analyze and criticize that past. He writes:

The historian not only re-enacts past thought, he re-enacts it in the context of his own knowledge and therefore, in re-enacting it, criticizes it, forms his own judgment of its value, corrects whatever errors he can discern in it.¹¹

This last, what Collingwood calls the “correction” of historical errors, is an approach to historical problems which utilizes the historian’s own self to isolate incongruity. This means that the historian puts himself in an empathetic relationship with the subject of his

¹⁰ Dilthey (1958), 213-5.

¹¹ Collingwood (1946).

study and then employs his empirical understandings of the world to test for sense and congruity in the historical accounts.

Peter Lowenberg, in an article which describes the current state of thought regarding the application of psychoanalysis to historical contexts, gives an account of how he sees Collingwood's theories put into practice in his historical works.

Collingwood was an ancient historian specializing in the study of Roman Britain as well as a philosopher, and his theories of empathetic history are applied in his historical studies. Lowenberg took as example Collingwood's argument that Hadrian's Wall was not a military fortification, as previously thought, but a sentry-walk and a deterrent to raiding parties. Lowenberg analyzes the historical process through which Collingwood made his argument, which involved casting himself into the position of the Roman engineers and sentries who respectively designed and policed the wall. Collingwood began from the observation that the wall itself was narrow and lacked the defensive apparatus which is in evidence in known Roman fortifications. He concluded that it was inconceivable that the engineers had designed it as a fortification, or that the soldiers could have formed an effective defensive line atop the wall. Lowenberg points out how Collingwood approached this problem in terms of the thoughts and experiences of the Romans involved, and the involvement of psychology inherent in an approach which is "a process of immersion in their problems and identification with their solutions, a practice analogous to psychoanalysis."¹²

Lowenberg traces the developing role of psychoanalysis in history after Collingwood, and argues that instead of self-consciously forming a sub-discipline of

¹² Lowenberg (2007), 22.

psychohistory, psychoanalysis was assimilated into historical practice quite naturally, by warrant of the inherent methodological similarities between psychoanalysis and history. He uses a psychological reading of the German Bauhaus to demonstrate how psychoanalysis can answer the question of how members of this creative institution were able to interact. In his view, the fact that the disciplines of psychoanalysis and history share both aims and methods allowed the two to become seamlessly integrated. He describes these aims and methods as:

A recognition of the subjectivity and self-reflexivity of interpretation; a quest for the latent meanings of manifest artefacts, symbols, and conduct; a recognition of the centrality of emotions in the structuring of motivation and action; the present condition, presenting complaint, pain, or symptom as key to the past, if only one knows how to read or decode the message; an empathetic method of understanding that includes the ability to engage with the cultural, social, and historical assumptions of the analysand or the subject; an attention to mini-narratives and the small telling detail that unfolds a larger level of meaning and interpretation.¹³

My comparative analysis of the practices of the Roman army and those of the Wehrmacht draws upon these social psychological studies and their relationship to history. Collingwood imagined the historian himself as an instrument, whose own experiences allowed him the ability to empathize with the motivations of men long dead. The historian still understands himself as an instrument when he attempts to isolate problems and incongruities in history, for example, that there is still an element of the unexplained in the phenomenon of the Roman camp. The Roman representation of the camp as the soldier's "second home", and the insistence that it should always be constructed

¹³ Lowenberg (2007), 34.

consistently, begs a psychological explanation. Similarly, the observation that the Roman soldier was subject to severe discipline, and that this served as a motivating factor, makes intuitive sense on a broad level, but a more exacting interpretation of the facets of this system of discipline and its intended effects remains somewhat vague.

In the case of the soldier in combat, few historians have comparable military experience from which to draw. The historian will therefore likely find it difficult to discern the suspicious and incongruous in military accounts because of the limitedness of his experience in those areas. In order to fill the gap, the historian must borrow from others. The comparative analysis of similar historical situations can provide us with accounts of similar experiences. In this way it is an extension of the theory of the empathetic historian, which utilizes not the historian's own experience, but the experience of others we find analyzed and documented in other places.

When we compare two historical contexts based on their similarities, we are first of all assigning meaning to those similarities. It is here my contention that the similarities between the practices of the Roman army and those of the Wehrmacht are meaningful; that they arise from a common aim or design. I would make the further assertion that what we learn from the better documented and analyzed historical context of the Wehrmacht can provide insight into the historical context of the Roman army, which is more distant and furnished with less evidence. In making this comparison, I will be making reference to the challenges posed by the particular context of the Wehrmacht against the background of Germany under National Socialism. The Wehrmacht was a product of the Weimar republic, the roots of which go back to Bismarkian- Prussian unification, and it was also a deeply conservative institution, which argued its innocence

at the Nuremberg trials and was judged to be not an inherently criminal organization, but nevertheless guilty of war crimes.¹⁴ The connection between the ideology of the Wehrmacht and Hitler's Nazi governance remains a topic of great controversy which extends from the question of the ordinary soldier's beliefs through to the political leanings of the highest members of command in the Wehrmacht and the degree to which the army as a whole adopted political ideologies.¹⁵ This historical problem is important to certain aspects of the comparison, such as the degree to which the soldiers of the Wehrmacht were motivated by ideological convictions as opposed to their group affiliations, but tangential to others, since later Nazi governance does not effect the psychological reasoning behind why such practices were instituted in the Wehrmacht during the Weimar Republic.

III. The Roman Army and the Wehrmacht

This section examines two of the most important practices of the Middle Republican army. The first is the manner in which they formed their camp, where the soldier spent the majority of his time while on campaign. The second is the rules of discipline and punishment enforced in the army, with a particular focus on those rules which involve the soldier ceasing to fight in the course of a battle, and will make reference to the discussion

¹⁴ For the judgements passed at Nuremberg and in particular transcripts of the Soviet objections to the acquittal of the Wehrmacht as a non-criminal organization, see Stackelberg and Winkle (2002), 386-91.

¹⁵ The debate was re-animated in Germany in 1995 when Hans Heer of the Hamburg Institute for Social Research created a museum exhibition entitled *The War of Extermination: Crimes of the Wehrmacht 1941-44*. See Hamburg Institute for Social Research (1999). On the ensuing controversy in Germany, see Bartov et al. (2002) which contains essays analyzing many different aspects of the problem and the sentiments which the controversy generated in Germany and beyond.

in Chapters One and Two of the dictum “victory or death.” Both of these aspects of the Roman military experience are given extensive attention by Polybius in his account of the practices of the Roman army, indicating that he considered them to be important aspects of the military efficiency which lay behind Rome’s success.¹⁶ This section presents the available sources which suggest the meaning and importance of the camp to the Roman army, and then uses as comparison practices in the Wehrmacht which are suggestive of the likely effects on the soldiers of their camp system. The chapter then turns to a comparative examination of disciplinary policies aimed towards encouraging, or forcing, soldiers to continue to fight, using the example of the Wehrmacht and a recent study of Iraqi troops conducted in 2003.¹⁷

Just as in the general statement current in Late Republican scholarship about the change in the soldier’s loyalties, which represented an unexamined assumption about the soldier’s psychological state, the practice of building camps has long been known to have a psychological factor. Polybius describes how this camp was build by all the soldiers along an unchanging plan that was familiar to everyone. The tents were all pitched in relationship to one another so that each soldier’s tent would always be, relatively, in the same place in every camp, no matter its geographic location. The regular, unchanging building of the camp in exactly the same fashion was something which, according to Polybius, the Romans in contrast to the Greeks insisted upon:

The Romans on the contrary prefer to submit to the fatigue of entrenching and other defensive work for the sake of the convenience

¹⁶ Polyb. 6.27-32: 37-8. See Chapter Two on Polybius.

¹⁷ Wong et al. (2003).

of having a single type of camp which never varies and is familiar to all.¹⁸

The camp was thus considered an indispensable part of the military experience because it was a place recognized by all the soldiers, and no matter where that camp was placed it was “familiar to all.” Luttwak considered the camp to be strategic both in a technical sense and as a mental boon to the soldiers, “a powerful psychological device.”¹⁹ There is an obvious psychological dimension to something so ritualistic and rigidly unchanging, and the camp is often described like a town or city. The Romans essentially take their homes with them wherever they go. Polybius describes the soldiers’ ability to navigate the camp as if it were their native city:

So that, as everyone knows exactly in which street and in what part of the street his tent will be, since all invariably occupy the same place in the camp, the encamping somewhat resembles the return of an army to its native city. For then they break up at the gate and everyone goes straight on from there and reaches his own house without fail, as he knows both the quarter and the exact spot where his residence is situated. It is very much the same thing in a Roman camp.²⁰

The words of Aemilius Paulus, as rendered by Livy, give an even more explicit description of the role of the camp as a kind of substitute city:

¹⁸ Polyb. 6.42.5: Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ τὴν περὶ τὰς τάφρους ταλαιπωρίαν καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ παρεπόμενα τούτοις ὑπομένειν αἰροῦνται χάριν τῆς εὐχερείας καὶ τοῦ γνώριμον καὶ μίαν ἔχειν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν αἰεὶ παρεμβολήν.

¹⁹ Luttwak (1976), 56.

²⁰ Polyb. 6.41.10-12: λοιπὸν ἐκάστου σαφῶς γινώσκοντος ἐν ποίᾳ ῥύμῃ καὶ ποίῳ τόπῳ τῆς ῥύμης σκηνοῖ διὰ τὸ πάντας αἰεὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπέχειν τῆς στρατοπεδείας, γίνεται τι παραπλήσιον, οἷον ὅταν εἰς πόλιν εἰσὶν στρατόπεδον ἐγχώριον. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ διακλίναντες ἀπὸ τῶν πυλῶν εὐθέως ἕκαστοι προάγουσι καὶ παραγίνονται πρὸς τὰς ἰδίας οἰκίσεις ἀδιαπτῶς, διὰ τὸ καθόλου καὶ κατὰ μέρος γινώσκειν ποῦ τῆς πόλεως ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἡ κατάλυσις, τὸ δὲ παραπλήσιον τούτοις καὶ περὶ τὰς Ῥωμαϊκὰς συμβαίνει στρατοπεδείας.

A camp is a resting-place for the victor, a shelter for the vanquished. How many armies to whom the fortune of battle has proved unkindly have been driven inside their ramparts and then at their own time, sometimes almost immediately, have made a sortie and repulsed their victorious foe? Here is the soldier's second fatherland [*patria altera*], here is his abode [*sedes*], with the rampart for its walls; here each finds in his tent, his home [*domus*] and his household gods [*penates*]. Ought we to have fought as homeless wanderers with no place to receive us after our victory?²¹

Several aspects of this assessment of the camp help us to piece together its meaning for the Roman soldier. Firstly, it has the effect of changing or reversing damaged spirits, something which implies that it has a calming or strengthening effect on soldiers' minds. Secondly, it is country as well as city, a representation of what the soldier fights for, made in miniature, his home, his household gods, implying that the army gives him not just country and city, but substitute home and family as well. Connected with this, it is a place which keeps the Romans civilized and stable, wandering and nomadism being a hallmark of barbarism.²²

There is one particular incident which is extremely revealing of the way in which the army camp was entrenched in the mentality of the Roman soldier. Livy tells us that when the Roman army was trapped by the Samnites at the Caudine Forks, the soldiers spontaneously began to build a camp:

For a long time they stood silent and motionless, then they saw the consuls' tents being set up and some of the men getting their entrenching tools ready. Though they knew that in their desperate and hopeless plight it would be ridiculous for them to fortify the ground on

²¹ Livy 44.39: castra sunt uictori receptaculum, uicto perfugium. quam multi exercitus, quibus minus prospera pugnae fortuna fuit, intra uallum compulsi tempore suo, interdum momento post, eruptione facta uictorem hostem pepulerunt? patria altera militaris est haec sedes, uallumque pro moenibus et tentorium suum cuique militi domus ac penates sunt. sine ulla sede uagi dimicassemus, ut quo <uicti, quo> uictores nos reciperemus?

²² Wiedemann (1986), 189-202.

which they stood still, not to make matters worse by any fault of their own they set to work without waiting for orders and entrenched their camp with its rampart close to the water. While they were thus engaged the enemy showered taunts and insults upon them, and they themselves in bitter mockery jeered at their own fruitless labor.²³

Despite their own conscious understanding that their efforts are useless, and despite their gallows humor, it seems that the Roman soldiers find something comforting in building their camp; creating a “home” in a situation of extreme danger. There is, obviously, some deep psychological connection between the Roman soldiers and their camp.

In order to elucidate this, we can introduce the comparative study of the German Wehrmacht, done by Shils and Jankowitz in 1948 based on research done both before and after D-Day in France and North Africa. This research was conducted by the Intelligence Section of the Psychological Warfare Division of SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force). Intelligence officers interrogated prisoners of war (Ps/W) both at the front lines and in rear areas. They also collected data from captured enemy documents, accounts from re-captured Allied military personnel, and reports of combat observers. It should be noted that the set of German soldiers interviewed does under-represent a certain group of these soldiers, known as “last-ditch” soldiers, who tended to persist in their efforts to extreme lengths and hence were captured less frequently than those soldiers who surrendered more readily. Although Shils and Jankowitz’s study has been extremely influential, and in many of its major aspects has been corroborated in more recent studies, it has also had its detractors. Perhaps the most

²³ Livy 9.2.12-4: diu immobiles silent; deinde, ubi praetoria consulum erigi uidere et expedire quosdam utilia operi, quamquam ludibrio fore munientes perditis rebus ac spe omni adempta cernebant, tamen, ne culpam malis adderent, pro se quisque nec hortante ullo nec imperante ad muniendum uersi castra propter aquam uallo circumdant, sua ipsi opera laboremque inritum, praeterquam quod hostes superbe increpabant, cum miserabili confessione eludentes.

important of these is Omar Bartov, whose book *Hitler's Army* sought to demonstrate that the soldiers were highly motivated by ideological principles.²⁴ Both objections and confirmations of the theories forwarded by Shils and Jankowitz shall be mentioned in the relevant discussions.

The psychological analysis which Shils and Jankowitz conducted on the data collected by Allied Intelligence, and that data itself, were in essence problem-based investigations. Their aim was to explain “the high degree of organizational integrity and fighting effectiveness through a series of almost unbroken retreats over a period of several years.”²⁵ German army units persisted until they were overpowered or overrun, and desertion and active surrender were rare. The Allied forces were surprised at the “extraordinary tenacity” of the German units, even when they knew their cause was collapsing and losing the war was inevitable.²⁶ Shils and Jankowitz concluded that this tenacity was the product of an extraordinary cohesion among the soldiers in the units. This in turn could be attributed to the organization of the army, because its structure allowed the primary personality demands of the individual soldier to be constantly met. Primary personality demands are: basic organic needs; affection and esteem from commanders and officers; a sense of power, and a regulated relationship with authority.²⁷ When these personality demands are met within the primary group, the section or unit with which the soldier interacts on a daily basis, the group is far less likely to dissolve through desertion or surrender. The Wehrmacht deliberately instituted structures within

²⁴ Bartov (1992).

²⁵ Shils and Jankowitz (1948), 280.

²⁶ Ibid, 280-1

²⁷ Ibid, 281.

its units in order to maintain a close relationship between its systems and regulations and the psychological theory of group cohesion. This practice has been described as the “conscious and systematic nurturing” of the primary group.²⁸

Where this study intersects with, and informs, the question of the Roman camp is in the opposition between the ties of comrades and the ties of family. We saw that the Roman camp was envisioned as a town or city, and the soldier’s tent called his “home” [*patria, sedes*]. This indicates by extension that his environment mimics the normal family environment he would experience at home. In the Wehrmacht, it was realized that group cohesion was augmented by weakening the ties that connected individuals to other groups which under normal circumstances would fulfill the soldier’s primary personality demands. When the soldier was at home as a civilian, these needs for affection and esteem were met by his family. Under normal circumstances, the soldier’s primary group was his family, and his attachment to this group weakened potential ties to his primary soldier group.²⁹ This part of the theory will become important to the Roman army because it is potential connection to a family unit which forms a major point of difference between the early Roman armies, where service was temporary and seasonal, and the professional army of the Late Republic.

The solution to the problem of attachment to family units implemented by the Wehrmacht was to set up a social structure in which the soldier’s primary group mimicked the family. The Wehrmacht traditionally fostered ties between its officer classes and its soldiers which mimicked familial relationships. German officers were

²⁸ Bartov (1992), 30.

²⁹ Shils and Jankowitz (1948), 289-90.

expected to lead their troops into battle, but were also responsible for their needs, “creating thereby a sense of belonging to a family, albeit a highly hierarchical and disciplined one, reflected in the customary junior commander’s form of address to his men as *Kinder*.”³⁰ The same dynamic is attested in the modern U.S. army. When soldiers serving in Iraq were questioned about their feelings towards their immediate comrades, they often used the analogy of the family to explain their relationships. One soldier said, “In the military, especially when you come out into the field, you have no family. Everyone here becomes your family”, and another, “I really consider these guys my own family, because we fight together, we have fun together... we are to the point where we even call the squad leader ‘Dad.’”³¹ The same practice of recreating the family is therefore attested in two very different armies: the modern U.S. army and the German Wehrmacht, which sprung from two very different cultural backgrounds and political atmospheres.

When Aemilius says about the Roman camp, “here each finds in his tent, his home and his household gods” he is talking about mimicry of the familial and civilian environment which is embedded within the everyday practices of the army. The identification by the soldier of his comrades as a family, seen in the U.S and German armies, was indicative of a high level of social cohesion.³² It seems likely, therefore, that the Roman practice of maintaining consistency in the physical layout of the camp, with each soldier living in his “home” or tent with his seven *contubernales*, was a practice which caused the soldiers to identify with their fellows in the same way as one would

³⁰ Bartov (1992), 31.

³¹ Wong, et al. (2003), 13.

³² Bartov (1992), 31; Wong et al. (2003), 30-3.

expect them to identify with their families. We should expect a high degree of group cohesion to develop.³³

In addition to the cohesive effect of mimicking family conditions, the familiarity of the physical surroundings in itself is known to have a calming effect. Aemilius considers it common sense that familiar surroundings can effect a profound psychological change when he says, “How many armies to whom the fortune of battle has proved unkindly have been driven inside their ramparts and then at their own time, sometimes almost immediately, have made a sortie and repulsed their victorious foe?”³⁴ It may seem common sense to us, as well, that unfamiliar persons and unfamiliar surroundings cause alarm, while familiar surroundings are a source of comfort.³⁵ Here again attention to the detailed psychological explanation, rather than the rule of thumb that we are used to, allows us a much more detailed understanding of the phenomenon that Aemilius references. It is a psychological principle that, “All of the conditions known to elicit flight in humans also elicit attachment behavior.”³⁶ This means that when the Roman soldiers flee back to their camp, they are seeking the familiar, people and places to which they have become attached. It is known that during flights and panic situations individuals will seek other individuals to whom they are attached, both during flight and afterwards.³⁷ The rigid layout of the Roman camp would have made this particularly easy and facilitated the reformation of groups. The effect of coming within

³³ It might also be tentatively speculative that the ban on marriage in the Imperial army would have had much the same effect, although there is so little evidence as to make its intention impossible to discern. For the most comprehensive study of the ban on marriage in the Roman army, see Phang (2001).

³⁴ Livy 44.39, quoted above. *quam multi exercitus, quibus minus prospera pugnae fortuna fuit, intra uallum compulsi tempore suo, interdum momento post, eruptione facta uictorem hostem pepulerunt?*

³⁵ Bowlby (1973), 96-123.

³⁶ Mawson (2007), 238; Bowlby (1969).

³⁷ Mawson (2007), 170-4.

the camp and then having that environment restore spirits enough to make an “immediate” sortie indicates the kind of psychological reversal which occurs when a soldier finds his comrades: “Confidence rises as the men come together.”³⁸

Another facet of the camp as restorative of morale and confidence pertains to the theory of the “haven of safety.” This theory will help us to elucidate the reason why the Romans, under the critical pressure of imminent defeat at the hands of the Samnites, began to build a camp. Mawson, in his recent study of panic in groups, has argued that when faced with a definite threat, individuals do not simply seek to flee from the danger zone: “On the contrary, flight is directed towards ‘havens of safety’ –to familiar people and locations outside the immediate area; and even within the danger zone the dominant tendency is to remain close to attachment figures.”³⁹ When the Romans found themselves trapped in such a danger zone, they could not flee to a haven of safety. Instead, they spontaneously began to try to create one.

It has long been assumed that the rigid and unchanging structures of the camp, and the very practice of building that camp, provided a kind of psychological solace for the Roman soldier.⁴⁰ By examining this assumption based on detailed psychological analyses of how and why this happens, we are able to expand the picture and better understand the impact of castrimentation on the Roman army. The comparison with practices of more recent armies, in which soldiers built bonds with their comrades to replace the familial bonds that they lacked in the field, is highly suggestive of the same phenomenon in evidence when the camp is spoken of as a “city” or a “home”. This

³⁸ Marshall (1947), 195.

³⁹ Mawson (2007), 174.

⁴⁰ Luttwak (1976), 56; Phang (2001), 69; Veg. *Mil.* 1.21.4-5; 3.8.1-3.

comparison allows us to hypothesize that one of the major effects of this rigid camp structure was to maintain group cohesion among the troops. By extension, the camp would be a factor contributing to the high degree of solidarity and cohesion that we see in the armies of the Late Republic. Although already in the Middle Republic, armies were in the field for longer, they eventually returned to their families and hence their familial bonds, something which in the modern armies served to weaken cohesion in the army. Once again, we see ‘common sense’ hypotheses, which are already being made in the scholarship, becoming fleshed out in the light of comparative material with psychological explanations. The Roman armies were away from home for longer, runs the conventional explanation, and so they formed closer bonds to their commanders than to the state. de Blois has already sought to modify this explanation by showing that it is not the commanders themselves to whom the soldiers are loyal, but often the most influential section of the army are the middle cadre, the officers commanding the smaller units.⁴¹ These are the same levels as the junior officers and squad commanders, which in the modern armies, developed strong relationships described as “like a family” by the soldiers. The psychological comparisons go a long way to explaining, not just that a greater cohesion happened in the Late Republican army, but why and how this happened.

IV. "Victory or Death"

The maintenance of group cohesion is only one way in which an army can be induced to stay together and to endure combat conditions to extreme lengths without surrender or

⁴¹ de Blois (2007), 164-79; de Blois (2000), 11-32.

desertion. A second, also highly effective way to make soldiers continue to fight is to make the alternatives to fighting undesirable. In Chapter Two I mentioned the Roman dictum of “victory or death”. On that occasion, I argued that this policy did not affect the actual manner of fighting on the battlefield, that is, it did not express itself in recklessness. There were two ways in which the Romans did enforce this strategy. The first of these is legal: there were rules which closed avenues of safety for the soldier in a deliberate attempt to encourage his performance in battle. The second is through punishments: by a system of penalties which made ceasing to fight undesirable or more dangerous than continuing.

It is made manifest by the sources which deal with legal penalties for deserters and surrendered soldiers that the Romans were aware of the effect of closing alternate avenues of safety for the soldier. We are told that these laws have been deliberately devised in order to manipulate the soldier’s mentality in battle. The Roman law of *postliminium* governed the return of soldiers to citizen status after they had been captured in war.⁴² According to the jurist Tryphoninus, quoted in the *Digest* of Justinian, the consideration of this right was restricted more rigidly in a time of peace than during war.⁴³ He explains, “Servius says that this decision was made because the Romans wished the citizens to place hope for return in martial courage rather than in peace.”⁴⁴ The source referred to is Servius Sulpicius Rufus, the consul of 51 B.C., who in his turn

⁴² The law of *postliminium* was wide-ranging and governed a multitude of other situations in addition to captured soldiers. See Cursi (1996); Kornhardt (1953).

⁴³ *Digest* 49.15.2. Although the meaning of the passage of Tryphoninus clearly indicates a restriction in *postliminium* during peace time, his phrasing is doubtful and has caused discussion. See Leigh (2004) 63-4; Watson (1967), 247-8; Lévy-Bruhl (1934), 37.

⁴⁴ Tryphoninus *Disputationes* 4 = *Digest* 49.15.2. Trans. Leigh (2004), 63.

refers to the reasoning of an earlier time period.⁴⁵ It was intended to close options for the soldier and to make surrender more difficult, dangerous and unpleasant than fighting on. Similar restrictions to the grant of *postliminium* reveal the same tactics, for we are told that it could not be granted to those who surrendered while armed, or deserted by absence from the army or actively going over to the enemy.⁴⁶

The other means of making alternatives to continued fighting unpleasant is by direct punishment. One of the major sources for discipline and punishment in the Republican army is Polybius, who records the wide range of crimes which result in harsh punishment in the military. These are: failing to keep the night watches in camp; theft; perjury; illicit sexual activity⁴⁷; committing a minor offense three times; boasting falsely of bravery; leaving one's station when providing cover, or in actual battle.⁴⁸ This punishment was meted out to individual men by their comrades in the ritual known as the *fustuarium*, in which the men of the camp clubbed the offender to death. In cases where whole units were at fault, Polybius describes the practice of decimation, in which a tenth part of the offending unit was singled out for execution in front of the whole legion.⁴⁹ The capital punishments were thus ostentatious displays which ensured that every soldier in the army was aware of the consequences of crime, especially desertion. The punishment of decimation of a legion appears to have fallen into disuse in the later

⁴⁵ Leigh (2004), 63.

⁴⁶ These are listed at Digest 49.15, but, like the statement of Tryphonius, seem to indicate a continuity of many centuries. For a summary of the ancient evidence for *postliminium* as applied to captured soldiers see Buckland (1908), 304-8. For the applicability of this late evidence to the Republican period, see Leigh (2004), 64-5.

⁴⁷ This appears to be the offense of *stuprum cum masculo*, punishable under Early Republican law, see Val. Max 6.1.10; Walbank, *Commentary* II, 720; Walters (1997), 29-45.

⁴⁸ Polybius lists these last three offences as ἀδικήματα, "crimes", but elsewhere he says that death is the penalty for deserting either post or battlefield (1.17.11-2), as is confirmed by Dionysius (Dion. Hal. 11.43.2).

⁴⁹ Polyb. 6.38.

Republic, although Plutarch mentions that Crassus reinstituted it for five hundred of his men who had thrown away their arms and fled from an army of Spartacus. This, too, was done ostentatiously and was a dreaded thing, for “disgrace also attaches to this manner of death, and many horrible and repulsive features attend the punishment, which the whole army witnesses.”⁵⁰ There are yet more examples of executions deliberately carried out in public circumstances: Livy tells the story of 370 Roman deserters taken to Rome, scourged in the *comitium*, and thrown from the Tarpeian rock⁵¹; a legion of Roman citizens who had taken over the city of Rhegium and were subsequently captured were scourged and beheaded in the forum⁵²; in 201 B.C. after the fall of Carthage, Scipio Africanus had all the Roman deserters found in the city crucified.⁵³

Polybius emphasizes the effects of this rigid discipline on military efficiency and tenacity of the troops in a battle situation:

Therefore the men in covering forces often face certain death, refusing to leave their ranks even when vastly outnumbered, owing to dread of the punishment they would meet with; and again in the battle men who have lost a shield or sword or any other arm often throw themselves into the midst of the enemy, hoping either to recover the lost object or to escape by death from inevitable disgrace and the taunts of their relations.⁵⁴

The principle explained here is quite simple- the men are induced to fight because the alternative has been made worse. Thus the threat of death has the effect of reducing the

⁵⁰ Plut. *Crass.* 10.2-3.

⁵¹ Livy 24.20.

⁵² Livy gives the number as 4,000 (28.28), Polybius as 300 (1.7.11).

⁵³ Livy 30.43.13; Val. Max. 2.7.12.

⁵⁴ Polyb. 6.37.12-14: διὸ καὶ τινες μὲν ἐν ταῖς ἐφεδρείαις προδήλως ἀπόλλυνται, πολλαπλασίων αὐτοῖς ἐπιγινόμενων οὐ θέλοντες λιπεῖν τὴν τάξιν, δεδιότες τὴν οἰκείαν τιμωρίαν: ἔνιοι δὲ κατ' αὐτὸν τὸν κίνδυνον ἐκβαλόντες θυρεὸν ἢ μάχαιραν ἢ τι τῶν ἄλλων ὅπλων παραλόγως ῥίπτουσιν ἑαυτοὺς εἰς τοὺς πολεμίους, ἢ κυριεύειν ἐλπίζοντες ὧν ἀπέβαλον ἢ παθόντες τι τὴν πρόδηλον αἰσχύνην διαφεύξεσθαι καὶ τὴν τῶν οἰκείων ὕβριν. Here “relations” is οἰκείοι, more likely comrades than relatives.

soldier's viable options and making the continuance of fighting the most attractive, even if that situation is, as Polybius says, certain to produce the same result. Even if a soldier happens to flee and escape his punishment, Roman social conventions ensure that the man would never be accepted again; he would face a kind of social death:

But even those who manage to escape are not saved thereby: impossible! for they are not allowed to return to their homes, and none of the family would dare to receive such a man in his house. So that those who have of course fallen into this misfortune are utterly ruined.⁵⁵

If we frame this concept in terms of military psychology, these threats of capital punishment and social rejection actually work to promote solidarity within army units. It is known that the role of the primary group in making soldiers continue to fight is reinforced by making the alternatives to fighting less likely to produce positive results. The cohesion of the primary group is significantly affected by the soldier's perception of his chances of escaping successfully. In his book on military cohesion, based on research gathered from the armies of the Soviet Union, the U.S., North Vietnam, and Israel, Henderson writes:

If soldiers perceive that relatively harmless administrative avenues of escape are open, or if soldiers believe the penalties for desertion are relatively light, cohesion in a unit will be weakened..... a cohesive unit will ensure that the soldier is aware of all legal, moral, and physical barriers that separate him from the civilian world and bind him to his unit.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Polyb. 6.37.4: τοῖς δ' ἐκπεσεῖν δυναμένοις οὐδ' ὥς ὑπάρχει σωτηρία: πῶς γάρ; οἷς οὐτ' εἰς τὴν πατρίδα τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐπανελθεῖν ἔξεστιν οὔτε τῶν ἀναγκαίων οὐδεὶς ἂν οἰκία τολμήσειε δέξασθαι τὸν τοιοῦτον. διὸ τελείως οἱ περιπεσόντες ἅπαξ τοιαύτη συμφορὰ καταφθείρονται.

⁵⁶ Henderson (1985), 16.

Therefore, this type of threat is intended to influence the mind of the soldier; it is important that the punishments for desertion be both severe enough to act as a deterrent, and widely known.

The threat of death or some other form of severe punishment as a deterrent to desertion and surrender is known as coercion, and it was a tactic integrated in the laws of the Wehrmacht. During the Second World War, some 22,750 German soldiers were sentenced to death for desertion, of which sentences approximately 15,000 were carried out.⁵⁷ In the latter days of the war when the Nazi regime became increasingly desperate, the rules imposed upon the soldiers of the Wehrmacht, already draconian, became demonstrably excessive. The SS divisions were known to deliberately commit atrocities upon enemy civilians and soldiers in front of Wehrmacht troops in order to show them that they could, correspondingly, expect only death from the enemy if they surrendered. In addition, the German soldiers were told that their families would be harmed if they were found to have deserted.⁵⁸

The practice of coercion is also attested in more modern armies. In 2003, a team of military psychologists from the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College traveled to Iraq in order to study combat motivation among soldiers who had participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom (March 20 – May 1, 2003). They interviewed both U.S. combat troops and Iraqi regular army soldiers. While the U.S. troops were found to be motivated to a high degree by unit cohesion, the Iraqi soldiers, who were all EPWs (Enemy Prisoners of War) of mainly low rank, almost universally cited coercion as

⁵⁷ Kitterman (1991), 450-462, 456.

⁵⁸ Shils and Jankowitz (1948), 292.

the reason that they continued to fight. The researchers found that the soldiers lived in fear of punishment at the hands of the Baath party or the *Fedayeen Saddam*, an organized paramilitary force which was entrenched in many of Iraq's cities during the operation. Many of the soldiers had been beaten and jailed for suspected desertion, and deserters from the army consistently retained their weapons to protect themselves from these "death squads", despite the fact that by remaining armed they exposed themselves to danger from reconnaissance units from the coalition forces who may not have recognized them as deserters.⁵⁹

It is in the light of these theories of military psychology, and the examples of how they have been utilized by the German and Iraqi armies, that we can reframe the Roman practice of military punishments. In these armies, just as in Polybius' descriptions, the best option for the soldiers was simply to persist in their fighting. The group coheres because external forces have made the alternatives unfeasible, and created conditions so that outside of the primary group there is no safety nor acceptance. From the examples of Roman deterrents to desertion and surrender, and what we know of the Roman camp, we can see that the Roman army was highly geared towards group cohesion. When the citizen served as soldier in the army, his family was replaced by a military unit, and that group met his psychological needs. In addition, he lived under conditions which gave him no viable option outside the environment of the military until he was discharged or the campaign ended. When the soldier was a citizen farmer, and returned to his plough, this group cohesion was broken and the soldier returned to another

⁵⁹ Wong, et. al. (2003), 455.

primary group, the family. In the Late Republic, the ties to the primary group, which replaced the family, were never broken in this fashion.

V. The Mutiny of 47 B.C.

The famous story of the mutiny of Caesar's troops in 47 B.C. is a striking example of a historical incident which has never been sufficiently explained. Accounts of the incident, both ancient and modern, have been dogged with a romanticism which leaves the story problematic, if an appealing read. The story is this: By 47 B.C., the cracks were beginning to show in even the most loyal of Caesar's soldiers. In the legions stationed in Campania waiting to be transported to Sicily and thence to Africa, discontent broke into mutiny.⁶⁰ Sallust, who had been sent to quell the mutiny, was attacked, and the soldiers marched on Rome, and according to Dio, they killed two senators during their journey. These soldiers were met by Caesar himself who is said to have broken their spirit with a single word, "Quirites".

The romantic appeal of this story is undeniable. It is tempting to attribute the event to the sheer force of personality of the legendary commander Caesar, so intimidating and imperious that the mutinous legions fell cowed at his feet at his barest utterance. In the biographies of Caesar, for a long time this has been how the incident has been interpreted. In Gelzer's *Caesar*, he writes that even before Caesar's words, it

⁶⁰ Cassius Dio explains that the soldiers demanded more money than they had received, commenting cynically that their demand was doubtless more than they deserved (42.52.1). Appian gives a fuller account of their complaints, relating that they claimed that Caesar had defaulted on promises made pre-Pharsalus, and in addition they had been under the colors far longer than law permitted (App. *B. Civ.* 2.92.)

was the sight of the commander which brought an abrupt change in the attitude of the soldiers, “The appearance of their glorious *imperator* broke the spirit of the mutineers.”⁶¹ Gelzer’s rendering of the tale is perhaps the most conservative, for in other authors we find an even greater impulse to recreate the story with touches of the dramatic. Meier imagined the scene when Caesar went to meet the troops, “There was an embarrassed silence. They were profoundly affected by the sight of their old commander, who appeared utterly composed, cold and silent –looking somewhat lonely perhaps, and visibly older.”⁶² Similarly, Goldsworthy’s more recent biography concentrates on aspects of humanity and empathy between commander and troops, “Caesar’s reply began calmly, which made it all the more shocking. In the past the soldiers had always been his ‘comrades’, but now he addressed them as ‘citizens’ (*Quirites*), and told these mere civilians that he willingly released them from service since that was what they wanted. The soldiers were stunned by this casual dismissal and their commander’s gentle reassurance that he would in time give them all the rewards that he had promised.”⁶³ The concentration of these authors on presenting an almost literary rendition of the scene illustrates how it has been used to create pathos and generate interest in Caesar’s personality and life.

Recently Chrissanthos has questioned the veracity of the account of the mutiny of 47 B.C., and in particular the assertion that Caesar quelled the mutiny with the word “*Quirites*”. Chrissanthos recognizes the incongruity in the story and argues that “the image of the strong and charismatic commander facing a mutinous army alone is a

⁶¹ Gelzer (1968), 263.

⁶² Meier (1992), 419.

⁶³ Goldsworthy (2006), 453.

common theme in historiography and literature.”⁶⁴ Chrissanthos proceeds by examining the actual outcome of the mutiny and argues that it seems that four of the nine veteran legions who participated in the mutiny actually won their discharge, while the others appeared to have received substantial bonuses to stay on. The apparent success of the mutiny, he writes, indicates that Caesar could hardly have quashed the spirit of the troops as easily as the story indicates. He concedes, “Though Caesar may have indeed used the *quirites* speech, its use did not terminate the mutiny. Only his willingness to negotiate and, to a considerable extent, to satisfy the demands of the men brought the uprising to an end.”⁶⁵ Chrissanthos’ article raises an important issue about the interpretation of stories with an obviously strong romantic appeal. He concludes that the recorded effect of Caesar’s use of the word *quirites* must have been exaggerated for dramatic purposes, but does not attempt to evaluate whether it is altogether false: Caesar “may have indeed used the *quirites* speech.”

The questions which come into play in deciding whether to accept or reject questionable accounts pertain to a multitude of factors, but essentially find their basis in what can be understood from an empirical standpoint. For example, in an influential article, Mogens Hansen has argued that the battle exhortation is a trope of ancient historiography rather than a historical reality. A key point of his argument is based on physical possibility; how far a strong voice can be expected to carry, how many gathered men a speaker is realistically able to reach. Based on these calculations Hansen rejected the idea that the ancient commander could have given a battle exhortation to a gathering

⁶⁴Chrissanthos (2001), 73.

⁶⁵ Ibid 75.

of several legions.⁶⁶ The same principle can be made to apply to the problem of Caesar and the *quirites* speech, substituting the principles of psychology for the laws of physics. The question is whether it is possible and likely that the legions were substantially cowed by Caesar's presence and words. The answer surely lies in the realm of human behavior, and with reference to the discipline of psychology the question becomes whether this kind of interaction can be proven consistent with known patterns of human behavior.

The first means of addressing this question is to explore the relationship between Caesar and his soldiers. It is evident that there are some sort of special circumstances in play at the moment where Caesar appears before the troops, for they do not bow to other sources of authority that they encounter during the mutiny. Caesar originally sent Sallust to resolve the conflict, but he was unsuccessful and both our major sources emphasize that he barely escaped with his life. Appian states, "he would have been killed had he not fled," Cassius Dio, "These [soldiers] nearly killed Sallust."⁶⁷ The fact that the mutineers did kill two senators during their march on Rome indicates that it was not merely the presence of an authority figure which caused their anger to subside. The first step in investigating this relationship between Caesar and his troops is to examine the character and history of the troops who took part in the mutiny.

The legions which mutinied in 47 B.C. were those which had been billeted at Campania by Marcus Antonius while Caesar himself took two legions to Alexandria. The troops which Antonius left in Italy consisted of no less than nine veteran legions which had served in the Gallic wars. Certain of those legions already in existence had

⁶⁶ Hansen (1993), 161-80.

⁶⁷ App. *B.Civ.* 2.92; Cass. Dio. 42.52.1.

been taken over by Caesar at the start of the Gallic campaigns, and others had been raised on his arrival in Cisalpine Gaul. These legions had therefore been in continuous service with him for almost ten years. One thing which is particularly important in assessing the likely dynamics in groups among these legions is the fact that casualties in the legions were not replaced by inserting fresh men into already formed units. We hear of some of Caesar's legions being seriously under-strength during the civil wars. Caesar tells us that the total number of men in the ten veteran legions at Pharsalus in August of 48 B.C. was 22,000 men, with seven cohorts in the camp, bringing the total to about 25,300-approximately half of their full strength.⁶⁸ At one point Caesar had sustained such heavy losses to the VIIIth and IXth that they appeared almost as one legion in this battle, but although stationed together to make the strength of one legion, they were not combined permanently. It was Roman practice simply to leave the legions as they were and recruit new ones under different numbers. Despite the condition of these depleted legions, for example, Caesar raised the XXVIIth in 49 B.C. Veteran legions were left intact, meaning that the soldiers served with the same men consistently for as long as the legion was in service, without receiving new comrades.

It is striking that the Wehrmacht implemented exactly the same policy, based not on the Roman system, but on military psychology pertaining to the cohesion of primary groups. Soldiers form more solid bonds with one another as a result of shared experiences. The cohesion of the soldier's primary group is known to be enhanced by "jointly experienced gratifications", for example when the soldiers' unit is involved in a

⁶⁸ Caes. *B.Civ* 3.89.

victory.⁶⁹ For this reason the Wehrmacht maintained a replacement policy designed to retain the integrity of divisions as far as possible. Entire units were refitted with new members behind the lines in order to give those new members a chance to assimilate into the group before they faced battle together. Such was the strength of belief in the effectiveness of this policy that German units sometimes became depleted by as much as 50-75 percent before they were considered for new recruits, although in such extreme cases the weakness of their unit negated the positive effects of maintained solidarity.⁷⁰ These rules were designed to protect group cohesion and solidarity and hence military effectiveness: the relationships between soldiers in primary groups of Caesar's army were likely to be close.

The idea that troops in Caesar's army possessed an extraordinary level of solidarity is something which he himself sought to promote. In the *Bellum Gallicum*, he gives us a detailed account of how two of his soldiers interact with one another in a highly charged battle situation.⁷¹ Caesar remarks upon the incident both for the bravery that the two men displayed, but also because the two soldiers are constructed as rivals, who nevertheless display the utmost loyalty to one another when in difficulties. In the introduction to the account, we learn that the two have a long history together:

In that legion there were two very brave men, centurions, who were now approaching the first ranks, T. Pullo, and L. Vorenus. These used to have continual disputes between them over which of them should be

⁶⁹ Shils and Jankowitz (1948), 287.

⁷⁰ Ibid 288.

⁷¹ Caes. *B.Gall.* 5.44.

preferred, and every year used to contend for promotion with the utmost animosity.⁷²

There are several hints about the length of the relationship between the two men. The fact that they were “approaching the first ranks” indicates that they had climbed the ranks more or less simultaneously over a period of time. Although Caesar does not mention to which legion the men belong, the scene is set in 54 B.C., and the legion is the same one of unspecified number which had been sent under the command of Quintus Cicero when Caesar divided up the legions to go to different winter quarters.⁷³ Caesar had nine legions under his command at this point; Legions VII, VIII, IX and X were inherited by Caesar at the beginning of the Gallic campaigns, and legions XI and XII raised at the same time. Legions XIII and XIV were raised in Cisalpine Gaul in 57 B.C., and the final legion, V, was raised in 54 B.C., although it is specified that when the legions were divided, this new legion was sent to the territory of the Eburones.⁷⁴ The minimum time that these men had been in service is therefore three years, and possibly longer. Moreover it seems that while they were deployed in the entrenchments, the two centurions were posted close enough together to be speaking to one another as they watched the fight. Caesar records their conversation:

When the fight was going on most vigorously before the fortifications, Pullo, one of them, says, "Why do you hesitate, Vorenus? What [better] opportunity of signaling your valor do you seek? This very day shall decide our disputes."⁷⁵

⁷² Caes. *B. Gall.* 5.44.1-2 : Erant in ea legione fortissimi viri, centuriones, qui primis ordinibus appropinquarent, Titus Pullo et Lucius Vorenus. Hi perpetuas inter se controversias habebant, quinam anteferretur, omnibusque annis de locis summis simultatibus contendebant.

⁷³ Caes. *B. Gall.* 5.24: 5.41.

⁷⁴ Caes. *B. Gall.* 5.24.

⁷⁵ Caes. *B. Gall.* 5.44.3-4 : Ex his Pullo, cum acerrime ad munitiones pugnaretur, "Quid dubitas," inquit, "Vorene? aut quem locum tuae probandae virtutis exspectas ? hic dies de nostris controversiis iudicabit."

It is likely, since a centurion commanded a century of about 80 men, and there were six centuries in each cohort, that the two commanded centuries deployed adjacent to one another. Pullo's words are a challenge to his comrade and rival, and in the ensuing fight, the fortunes of the two are exchanged twice; firstly Pullo was struck by a dart and, unable to draw his sword, was surrounded. Vorenus came up to help but ran into trouble, and:

To him, in his turn, when surrounded, Pullo brought relief; and both having slain a great number, retreated into the fortifications amid the highest applause. Fortune so dealt with both in this rivalry and conflict, that the one competitor was a succor and a safeguard to the other, nor could it be determined which of the two appeared worthy of being preferred to the other.⁷⁶

The moral of the tale is quite clear. In Caesar's army, even those with deep personal rivalries, when put under pressure, would act like the most loyal of comrades. The story is saying something quite profound about not just the personalities of the two men but the character of Caesar's troops as a whole. The idea that Caesar maintained an atmosphere conducive to extreme efforts on the part of his soldiers was an enduring one. Caesar's camp became known for being an environment of the extraordinary, a "berceau d'héroïsme" in which soldiers would strive tirelessly against incredible odds.⁷⁷ Valerius Maximus gives the example of M. Caesius Scaeva during the civil wars, whose shield

⁷⁶ Caes. *B. Gall.* 5.44.14-15 : Huic rursus circumvento fert subsidium Pullo, atque ambo incolumes compluribus interfectis summa cum laude sese intra munitiones recipiunt. Sic fortuna in contentione et certamine utrumque versavit, ut alter alteri inimicus auxilio salutique esset, neque diiudicari posset, uter utri virtute antefendus videretur.

⁷⁷ Capdeville (1972), 619.

was recovered, famously, pitted with 120 separate holes.⁷⁸ According to Valerius, Scaeva endured his fight even when mutilated; in Caesar's account four centurions in the same fight lost their eyes. Valerius attributes this extraordinary level of performance seen in Caesar's soldiers to the skill of Caesar himself. Speaking of the tale of Scaeva, and another of Caesar's soldiers, Acilius, who lost a hand in a naval battle, he writes, "Such soldiers did discipline nurture in the camp of the divine Julius. They stuck to the enemy, the one after sacrificing his right hand, the other his eye."⁷⁹

The major factor being commented upon here is the endurance of the soldiers- the ability to continue despite a high degree of physical harm. Like the idealized soldier-survivor that we saw in Chapter One, these men endure and overcome danger. Valerius attributes this phenomenon to Caesar's discipline, although it is difficult to understand exactly what he means by this. If he refers to strict rules and punishments, then we might remark that Scaeva's action is exemplary because it is above and beyond the call of duty. Scaeva is unlikely to have endured his physical mutilation out of fear of punishment for falling back in the face of the such an enemy onslaught. It seems, from the fact that Valerius mentions discipline nurturing soldiers who continued fighting even to the point of their own mutilation, that he is expressing the opinion that there was a shared mentality among the soldiers of the camp which insisted upon higher than normal standards of endurance.

Valerius attributed the heightened tenacity of the Roman troops to the influence of Caesar himself, and there is in fact evidence that Caesar exerted an

⁷⁸ Val. Max 3.2.23; Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.53.

⁷⁹ Val. Max 3.2.23: *Talis in castris diui Iuli disciplina milites aluit, quorum alter dextera, alter oculo amisso hostibus inhaesit.*

extraordinary influence over his own soldiers. In order to investigate this, we can profitably revisit the incident at Ruspina described in Chapter Five, this time using the observed and psychologically categorized experiences of other soldiers to check for sense and congruity in the account. To recap briefly, we are told that early in the African campaign, Caesar advanced to Leptis, and then abruptly changed direction and returned to Ruspina, where he had previously had the Romans in camp. There he left the troops and himself departed for the coast. One of the most prominent facets of the account which was isolated in chapter five was the fact that there is a sense of incongruity within the account itself. The author uses the technique of empathetic history now familiar to us from Collingwood's theory described above:

I think [*existimo*] that he acted with this intention, that by keeping possession of the maritime cities, and providing them with garrisons, he might secure a retreat for his fleet.⁸⁰

The author is utilizing his own experience and knowledge to write a piece of empathetic history; imagining himself in Caesar's place in order to discern the intent behind an action which seems unusual and unclear. The entire camp was left in a state of total ignorance and the atmosphere quickly turned anxious. The story bears repeating here:

Everyone in the army was ignorant of the plan of the imperator, and everyone sought to know it, and they were troubled with great fear and depression. For being few in number, mostly new recruits, and those not all disembarked, they saw themselves exposed, upon a foreign coast, to the mighty forces of a crafty nation, supported by an innumerable cavalry. Nor could they discern anything to console them in their present plight, no help in the councils of their comrades. They

⁸⁰ Caes. *B. Afr.* 1.9: Hoc eum idcirco existimo recepisisse ut maritima oppida post se ne vacua relinqueret praesidioque firmata ad classis receptacula muniret.

derived all their hope from the alacrity, vigor, and wonderful cheerfulness that appeared in their general's countenance; for he was of an intrepid spirit, and behaved with undaunted resolution and confidence. On his conduct, therefore, they entirely relied, and hoped to a man, that by his skill and talents, all difficulties would vanish before them.⁸¹

There is something deeply odd about this account. In Chapter Five I pointed out the way that the troops search around for information, and that they deem the commander's countenance sufficient as a source for that information. This does, however, seem like fairly slight reassurance for men who were facing the threat of death. The account becomes a lot more comprehensible if we hold it up to the light of psychological principles. Instrumental to this assessment is Irving Janis' article "Group Identification under Conditions of External Danger", which describes what happens to the dynamics of groups when they are faced with external pressures and stressors.⁸² Janis explains how the leader can take on an inflated significance for groups who perceive themselves to be in danger. According to Janis' studies, under real conditions of danger unconscious dependency needs rise to the surface and manifest themselves in what are known as "transference reactions". The concept of transference reactions dates back to Freud, whose view in his 1922 work, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, was that in groups a "libidinal bond" developed between leader and led, in which the leader takes the place of the parent, and becomes idealized in the same way that a child idealizes a parent.

⁸¹ Caes. *B. Afr.* 1.10: Omnibus in exercitu insciis et requirentibus imperatoris consilium, magno metu ac tristimonia sollicitabantur. Parva enim cum copia et ea tironum neque omni eita in Africa contra magnas copias et insidiosae nationis equitatum innumerabilem se eitos videbant. neque quicquam solacium in praesentia neque auxilium in suorum consilio animum advertebant. nisi in ipsius imperatoris vultu vigore mirabilique hilaritate; animum enim altum et erectum prae se gerebat. Huic adquiescebant homines et in eius scientia et consilio omnia sibi proclivia omnes fore sperabant.

⁸² Janis (1963), 227-38.

These transference reactions explain the way that German officers referred to their soldiers as *Kinder*, and American soldiers their squad leader as ‘Dad’. Janis confessed himself impressed by “manifestations of unconscious dependency needs... among combat soldiers.” These dependency needs manifested themselves in behaviors of soldiers under stress. Janis found that, “This fear-ridden type of dependency is likely to develop toward any authority figures who are perceived to be in a position to increase or decrease their chances of warding off danger.” Janis calls them “danger control authorities”, and the soldier’s reaction to them is often to misperceive them, exaggerate their power and “become pre-occupied with whether his intentions are good or bad. They also become extraordinarily sensitive to his demands, continually attempting to do and say things that will please him, reacting with bitter disappointment to any apparent slights, and becoming depressed or aggrieved whenever they are not in communication with him.” The building of these kinds of ties to the leader is augmented when the group is isolated from society, as in an army on campaign.⁸³

This knowledge of psychology, based on observed behaviors from a morale research organization of the U.S. army working in the Second World War, provides a certain amount of insight into the happenings at Ruspina. In particular, their sense of reliance on Caesar, based on as little as the general manner in which he had acted the last time he had been seen, sounds a lot like the behaviors of pre-occupation and elevating of the power of the authority figure. The author mentions specifically that the soldiers were meditating on his intentions and placed their faith in his ability to keep them from danger, “On his conduct, therefore, they entirely relied, and hoped to a man, that by his skill and

⁸³ Ibid 228, cf. Mawson (2007), 145.

talents, all difficulties would vanish before them.” The “great fear and depression” which springs up in Caesar’s absence is also indicative of soldiers who have formed bonds with their leader based on transference reactions.

The hypothesis that Caesar evoked this kind of dependency reaction from his troops is less speculative than it might seem. While in this study, psychology is being used to elucidate history, the discipline of psychology has long used history to illustrate its principles. According to Phillips’ study of leadership, not every commander has the ability to lead in a way which invokes troops to extreme devotion. Only a leader who impresses and dominates by virtue of his character and personal qualities, and is able to influence the minds of a large group without having intimate personal contact with them, can command in this fashion. Such men he called “mass leaders”, who arouse hero-worship and unbounded devotion, and he wrote that every great military leader was a leader of this type: Napoleon, Marmont, McClellan, Grant, and so forth.⁸⁴ Surely Caesar may be added to this list.

Let us take this theory as our hypothesis, bearing in mind the insistence of Caesar on the environment of his camp as one with a high degree of solidarity and endurance among the soldiers, and the highly suggestive behaviors of the soldiers at Ruspina which point towards dependency reactions. We can now use this hypothesis to turn back to the central question which was first posed about the mutiny in 47 B.C. The legions which mutinied against Caesar in 47 B.C. were the nine legions from the Gallic campaigns which were stationed in Campania. The sources indicate that all nine of these legions participated in the mutiny. The legions which are named in the sources are X and

⁸⁴ Phillips (1943), 289-306.

XII, Legio X being the one with which Caesar reportedly had the best relationship. In the mutiny at Vesontio he had used the loyalty of this legion as leverage, claiming that he would march with the Xth alone.⁸⁵ The relationship between Caesar and these troops was thus, if anything, likely to be considerably stronger than the one formed with the troops at Ruspina, who had been with Caesar only for a few months.

In Appian's account of the moment in which Caesar faced his troops, we see a tumult of changing emotions on the part of the soldiers. Several times we see exactly what the psychological studies suggest would happen when a figure to whom soldiers are extremely devoted expresses his disappointment in them. Janis observed that such soldiers "become extraordinarily sensitive to his [the leader's] demands, continually attempting to do and say things that will please him, reacting with bitter disappointment to any apparent slights."⁸⁶ It is this reaction on the part of the troops that our biographers found so romantic, and Chrissanthos found so unlikely. In fact, this exact exchange happens three times during the course of the encounter as Appian records it. When the soldiers first make their demands, Caesar's reply causes consternation:

But, contrary to the expectation of all, he replied without hesitation, "I discharge you." Then, to their still greater astonishment, and while the silence was most profound, he added, "And I shall give you all that I have promised when I triumph with other soldiers." At this expression, as unexpected as it was kind, shame immediately took possession of all, and the consideration, mingled with jealousy, that while they would be thought to be abandoning their commander in the midst of so many enemies, others would join in the triumph instead of themselves, and they would lose the gains of the war in Africa, which were expected to be great, and become hateful to Caesar himself as

⁸⁵ Caes. *B. Gall.* 1.41.

⁸⁶ Janis (1963), 228.

well as to the opposite party. Moved by these fears they remained still more silent and embarrassed, hoping that Caesar would yield and change his mind on account of his immediate necessity.⁸⁷

The key to this exchange is that Caesar expresses signs of disappointment in his soldiers. His statement that he would triumph with the other soldiers indicates that they would be higher in his own esteem. His apparent willingness to let them be discharged without a fight is also something of a slight. Appian's speculation about the reason that the soldiers fall silent is that they are worried about his opinion of them, that they would become "hateful" to him. After this exchange comes the famous word:

But he remained silent also, until his friends urged him to say something more to them and not leave his old comrades of so many campaigns with a short and austere word. Then he began to speak, addressing them first as "citizens," not "fellow-soldiers," which implied that they were already discharged from the army and were private individuals. They could endure it no longer, but cried out that they repented of what they had done, and besought him to keep them in his service.⁸⁸

Appian emphasizes the meaning of this word- it implied that the soldiers were already discharged. It implied, in other words, that the soldiers' relationship to their commander had ended, and that he had rejected them by discharging them. The reaction was immediate and strong, and indicative of the characteristic "heightened sensitivity to

⁸⁷ App. *B. Civ.* 2.93: ὁ δὲ παρὰ τὴν ἀπάντων δόξαν οὐδὲ μελλήσας ἀπεκρίνατο· “ἀφίημι.” καταπλαγέντων δ’ αὐτῶν ἔτι μᾶλλον καὶ σιωπῆς βαθυτάτης γενομένης ἐπέειπε· “καὶ δώσω γε ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπηγγελμένα ἅπαντα, ὅταν θριαμβεύσω μεθ’ ἐτέρων.” ἀδοκίτου δ’ αὐτοῖς ἅμα καὶ τοῦδε καὶ φιλανθρώπου φανέντος, αἰδῶς αὐτίκα πᾶσιν ἐνέπιπτεν καὶ λογισμὸς μετὰ ζήλου, εἰ δόξουσι μὲν αὐτοὶ καταλιπεῖν σφῶν τὸν αὐτοκράτορα ἐν μέσοις τοσοῖσδε πολεμίοις, θριαμβεύσουσι δ’ ἀνθ’ αὐτῶν ἕτεροι καὶ σφεῖς τῶν ἐν Λιβύῃ κερδῶν ἐκπεσοῦνται, μεγάλων ἔσεσθαι νομιζομένων, ἐχθροὶ τε ὁμοίως αὐτοῦ τε Καίσαρος ἔσσονται καὶ τῶν πολεμίων. Δείσαντες οὖν ἔτι μᾶλλον ἡσύχαζον ἐξ ἀπορίας, ἐλπίζοντες ἐνδώσειν τι καὶ τὸν Καίσαρα καὶ μεταγνώσεσθαι διὰ τὴν ἐν χερσὶ χρεῖαν.

⁸⁸ App. *B. Civ.* 2.93: ὁ δ’ ἀνθησύχαζε καὶ τῶν φίλων αὐτὸν παρακαλούντων ἐπιφθέγξασθαι τι πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἄλλο καὶ μὴ βραχεῖ καὶ αὐστηρῶ λόγῳ πολλὰ συνεστρατευμένους ἐγκαταλιπεῖν, ἀρχόμενος λέγειν πολίτας ἀντὶ στρατιωτῶν προσεῖπεν· ὅπερ ἐστὶ σύμβολον ἀφειμένων τῆς στρατείας καὶ ιδιωτευόντων.

expressions of approval and disapproval” on the part of the leader which happens when soldiers have developed dependency on a danger-control authority. The soldiers clamor for their former relationship to be restored. The situation intensifies when Caesar goes on to single out the tenth legion and assign particular censure to it:

At length he came back and said that he would not punish any of them, but that he was grieved that even the tenth legion, to which he had always given the first place of honour, should join in such a riot. "And this legion alone," he continued, "I will discharge from the service. Nevertheless, when I return from Africa I will give them all that I have promised. And when the wars are ended I will give lands to all, not as Sulla did by taking it from the present holders and uniting present and past owners in a colony, and so making them everlasting enemies to each other, but I will give the public land, and my own, and will purchase as well the necessary implements." There was clapping of hands and joyful acclaim on all sides, but the tenth legion was plunged in grief because to them alone Caesar appeared inexorable. They begged him to choose a portion of their number by lot and put them to death. But Caesar, seeing that there was no need of stimulating them any further when they had repented so bitterly, became reconciled to all, and departed straightway for the war in Africa.⁸⁹

This, certainly, is behavior which cannot be explained in reference to common sense and heuristics about what the historian knows of the world. Faced with their leader himself, with whom the tenth legion had served for almost fifteen years, they offered their lives rather than endure the shame of knowing his disappointment in them. Quite clearly there was a deep psychological bond between Caesar and the tenth legion. The theory of

⁸⁹ App. *B. Civ.* 2.94: ἐπανελθὼν δ' ὁμῶς ἔφη κολάσειν μὲν αὐτῶν οὐδένα, ἄχθεσθαι δ', ὅτι καὶ τὸ δέκατον τέλος, ὃ προετίμησεν αἰεὶ, τοιαῦτα θορυβεῖ. "καὶ τόδε," ἔφη, "μόνον ἀφήμι τῆς στρατείας· δώσω δὲ καὶ τῷδε ὁμῶς τὰ ὑπεσχημένα ἅπαντα, ἐπανελθὼν ἐκ Λιβύης, δώσω δὲ καὶ γῆν ἅπασιν ἐκτελεσθέντων τῶν πολέμων, οὐ καθάπερ Σύλλας, ἀφαιρούμενος ἐτέρων ἢν ἔχουσι καὶ τοῖς ἀφαιρεθεῖσι τοὺς λαβόντας συνοικίζων καὶ ποιῶν ἀλλήλοις ἐς αἰεὶ πολεμίους, ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ δήμου γῆν ἐπινέμων καὶ τὴν ἑμαυτοῦ, καὶ τὰ δέοντα προσωνούμενος." κρότου δὲ καὶ εὐφημίας παρὰ πάντων γενομένης, τὸ δέκατον ὑπερήλγει τέλος, ἐς μόνον αὐτὸ τοῦ Καίσαρος ἀδιαλλάκτου φανέντος· καὶ σφᾶς αὐτὸν ἠξίουσαν διακληρώσαι τε καὶ τὸ μέρος θανάτῳ ζημιῶσαι. ὁ δὲ οὐδὲν αὐτοὺς ὑπερεθίζειν ἔτι δεόμενος ἀκριβῶς μετανοοῦντας, συνηλλάσσετο ἅπασιν καὶ εὐθὺς ἐπὶ τὸν ἐν Λιβύῃ πόλεμον ἐξήει.

transference reactions offers the best, and perhaps only, rational and detailed explanation for why and how this had happened.

It seems to me that the famous “Quirites” story rests quite firmly within the realm of known human behavior. Two factors were working within Caesar’s army which would make the extraordinary attachment and devotion of his soldiers quite understandable. Firstly, the length of service of the veteran Gallic troops and their relative isolation from any influences other than those of their comrades and leaders, known to promote cohesion among primary groups, or, in other words, loyalty to, and focus on, the environment of the army. Secondly, as we see happening in the army at Ruspina, the transference of dependency needs onto the leader. The troops at Ruspina were recruits, under arms for two months; one can only imagine the depth of the bond that had been forged with the veteran legions over such a long period of time.

VI. Conclusion

The story of Caesar cowing his mutinous soldiers in 47 B.C. with one word provides the historian with a range of options. Instinct and experience dictates that the tale seems unlikely, or romantic, and one may be tempted to simply label it part of the Caesar legend, ascribing it to a tradition but not a reality. It is my contention that such stories can be legitimately put to a test which is more strident than Collingwood’s application of empathetic understanding, and instead reaches further towards psychoanalysis. The employment of comparable situations which have received modern psychological analysis can go a long way to deciding what is, and what is not, within the framework of

known human experience. The actions of Caesar's army certainly are, and this information makes the difference between a story which is incongruous and a story which is entirely explicable.

In the case of the broader question, the Late Republican soldier and the psychological changes which separate him from his Mid-Republican counterpart, the application of comparative evidence suggests that we re-frame his story in terms of dependency rather than loyalty. Throughout the account of Polybius and in other sources which emphasize a victory or death mentality, or describe punishments and systems of honor, we can see that in the Mid Republic the soldier's options were diminished for the very specific purpose of making him a conqueror. In the Late Republic, alternate sources of comfort, safety, and psychological soundness were completely denied to the soldier, making him dependant on the army not just for physical, but also for mental needs.

Conclusion

I. The Articulation of the Soldier's Role

A significant part of the soldier's story rests in how clearly principles of virtue and vice and bravery and cowardice are articulated. Polybius saw in the Romans a shared sense of purpose, a clear vision of Rome's destiny and the perpetuation of easy to understand, universal ideas about what constituted good in Roman society. These values were reinforced by ceremony and tradition, and their effects were psychological. Roman success was built upon the determined soldier who believed in self sacrifice and willingly subordinated his personal interests to the state. This psychological security was shaken on an individual level when the soldiers in Livy discovered that the Roman idea of what the soldier should be doing —continuing to soldier— would be pushed to the most extreme levels. The idea that the soldier's *virtus* rested in continuity, once articulated, was adhered to with great tenacity, indicating how important was the soldier in action. The framework of the soldier in action is completed in Sallust, where the decline of society is marked by the soldier who no longer has a clearly articulated sense of what virtue means.¹ War and the threat of war was the only thing keeping Rome together, and in a time of peace certainty and mental confidence fell by the wayside. An uncertain soldier was a soldier who stopped soldiering, and therefore lost all his significance.

¹ Sallust, naturally, is writing many years before Livy, but the historical material is chronologically later than that in the bulk of the extant text of Livy.

II. The Significance of the Soldier

The soldier has a role to play in forming and preserving the state which stretches far beyond its physical security. The soldier figure carries a great weight in Roman society and this is reflected in the authors who deal with him. He is responsible for Rome's national character, ascendancy, and eternity. In some accounts, he is also responsible for her defeats and moral downfall. The key to whether he is a figure of good or bad significance for the state is whether he is physically engaged in the act of soldiering or not. The meaning of the soldier figure is only fully realized when he is engaged in soldiering, and this is why so many cultural practices and efforts are directed towards keeping the soldier performing. The *legiones Cannenses* precipitated a culture and a set of rules which excluded the poisonous figure of the non-performing soldier and purged him from society. The effect of these rules was to push him away from being the dangerous soldier –the one who would stop performing and cause a vulnerability in the state- into the one who realized Rome's mission, the soldier conqueror. Military efficiency was vital, for without it, as in Sallust's vision, Rome fell apart.

III. Military efficiency

Military efficiency is an important part of current thought about the military and an interest of psychological studies about the military, but it was also a pressing concern for the authors treated in this dissertation. Military efficiency varies little in definition and significance from author to author, and even, in the comparative sections of this

dissertation, from army to army. In the discussion of the soldier and psychology, it was the idea of military efficiency which formed the starting point for the research that was used to illuminate the practices of the Roman army. This research was born of a desire to explore and define the extraordinary tenacity of the Wehrmacht forces in the final months of the Second World War. The concepts implied by the word “efficiency”, fast, effective fighting, for example, were not at all what was meant by the term “military efficiency” in either modern times or Roman. The Allied intelligence forces defined military efficiency using the same framework which characterized the soldier in Livy - the ability to continue, without desertion, surrender, or fragmentation of fighting units. For the Romans, the same policies which were enforced in the Wehrmacht to induce military cohesion eventually served to divorce the soldier from the state.

In Livy we saw that there was a school of thought which wanted the soldier to be a purely physical being, to keep soldiering at any lengths without fear or second-guessing his commander. Caesar’s army showed that it was with reasoned appeal to the soldier’s mind that he kept his own troops performing. The policies and practices which were already in place in the Mid-Republican army, which dealt dire punishments for desertion and surrender, forced the soldier to invest himself into the army and privilege that military existence above other relationships. Without strict adherence to those military duties, those other relationships were not a viable option for the soldier, who would be excluded from a society in which even his family would not “dare to receive him.”² This policy, along with the manner in which the camp acted as a substitute for the native city and the soldier’s family, formed part of the groundwork which would

² Polyb. 6.37.4.

eventually divorce the soldier from the state entirely. In the story of Cincinnatus, the dictator reluctantly takes himself away from his wife and family to return to the army. Ideally, the soldier's deep connection to his comrades was routinely replaced by a period of civilian life in which he relied on and interacted with his own family. When this was removed, and the legislation of the Gracchi failed to restore the link, the cart was before the horse; the soldier had no family to which to return. There was nothing to which the soldier could turn to fulfill his psychological needs other than his fellows and his commander.

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